



NOTHING ABOUT YOUR LIFE  
WORLD CAN UNDERSTAND  
THE MEN WHO CONTROL YOUR

**CLAUSTROPHOBIA**

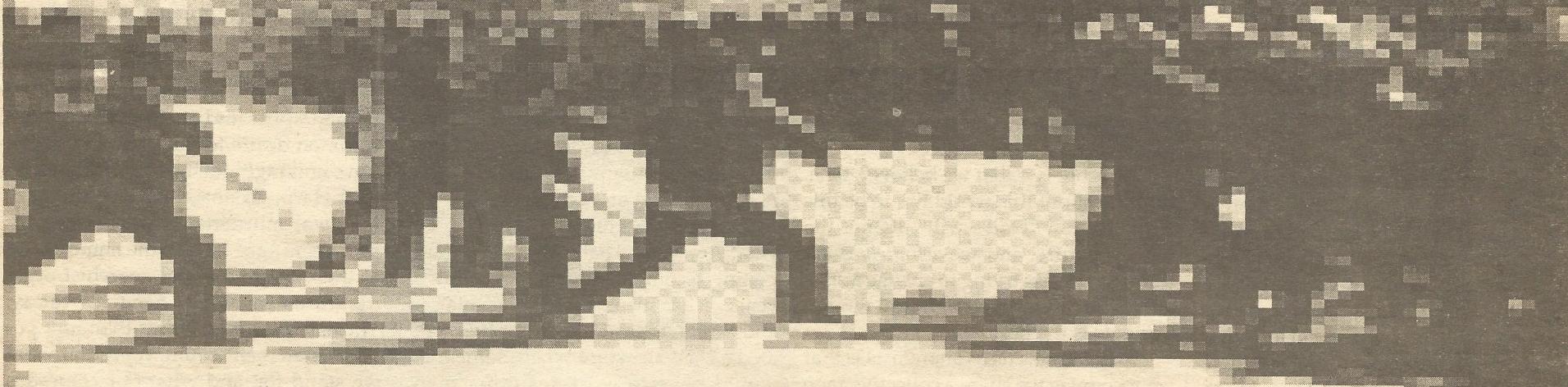
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**INSIDE:** THE ARCHITECTURE OF CONTROL AT MADISON & FALLSWAY • LIFE OF AN URBAN GUERILLA • TWO VIEWS OF 'HARM CITY' FROM STREET LEVEL • INTERVIEW WITH AN ANTI-RACIST SKINHEAD • BRICKS AND MORTAR FOR THE NEW TOWER OF BABEL • VOICES OF PRISONERS • STRUGGLE AND SOLIDARITY

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# CLAUSTROPHOBIA

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## A Few Notes on the Lockdown of Baltimore

BY CURTIS PRICE

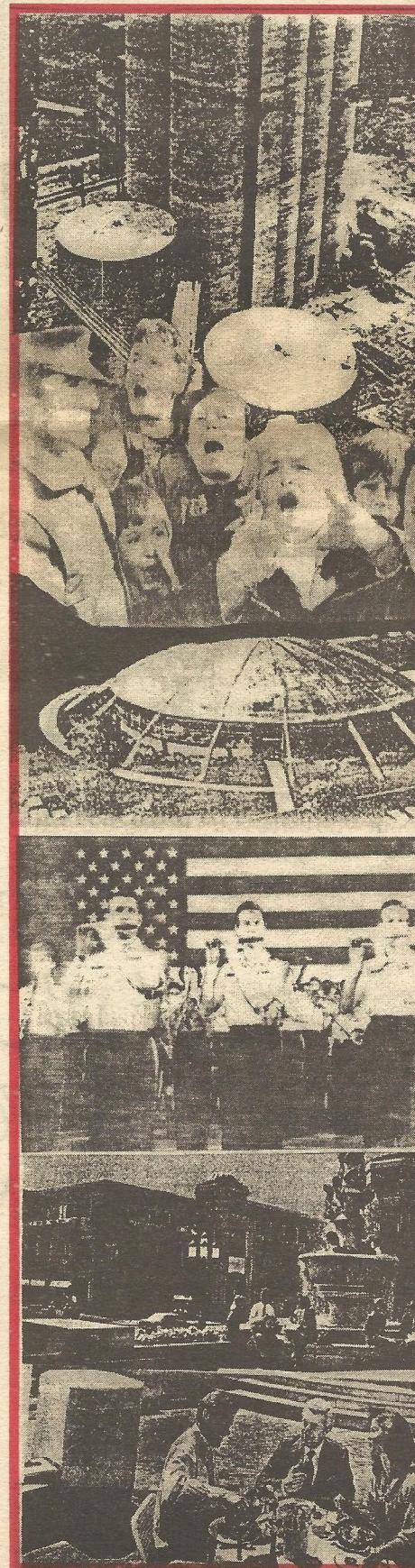
In the past twenty years, American cities have undergone a profound transformation; a transformation in part due to changes in the global economy and in part due to home-grown capitalist restructuring. In this article, I'll take a look at some of the effects of this restructuring in Baltimore, particularly at the micro-level and how the state promotes and reinforces it, leading to further social exclusion and repression.

Although located south of the Mason-Dixon, Baltimore for all intents and purposes is a rust-belt Black majority city more akin to a Detroit or Cleveland than to an Atlanta or Charlotte. The city seems forlornly destined to trod along the same path as a Camden, NJ and East St. Louis, IL. A few years ago, one liberal reformer scandalized the local foundation footing his tab by claiming that Baltimore was "beyond salvaging" in his report of the city's future. What he really meant was that Baltimore's problems could not be solved by solutions generated locally but only by a massive influx of federal aid. But it was the "beyond salvaging" part that grabbed the local headlines - without the caveat of federal aid. For many people living here, it was a cruelly accurate description of the city's plight.

Looking at all the indices of social misery, Baltimore consistently ranks in

the national top five. The teen pregnancy and VD rates are soaring. The city has an estimated 30,000 residents (out of a population of a little under 700,000) in need of drug treatment. At last count, there were over 10,000 people waiting for public housing. Housing officials recently abolished the federal preferences as applied to public housing - an option generously bestowed on them by the Clinton administration. Federal preferences permit the homeless, disabled, victims of spousal abuse and those deemed living in substandard, dangerous conditions the right to priority placement in public housing. As of June, this option no longer exists. The Housing Authority states it wants to attract a "better" clientele. But the so-called "better" clientele is steadily depopulating the city - in 1996, 10,000 people moved out, in a stunning out-migration reminiscent more of wartime exodus than standard suburban flight.

The picture is no better when it comes to jobs. One recent estimate stated that in the next three years, a grand total of 222 new entry-level unskilled jobs were going to be created in Baltimore proper (the picture was considerably rosier for the outlying suburbs but poor public transportation virtually excludes many people in the inner city from going after such jobs). With one in



Many worlds are stacked on top of each other; you might not even realize that its all one system

## Ever wonder just what they mean when they say 'empowerment'?

BY SEER

Why is it important to watch what's going on in the bullshit world of 'urban policy'? For one, that's where all of life takes place: every spark of love and every act of everyday resistance takes place over an ugly decomposing backdrop of divided neighborhoods, dark electric-lit streetcorners, and concrete and brick walls. We suffer because we can't control that backdrop and we get thrown around without mercy at the whims of politicians, business hacks, and landlords with control freak complexes. Hundreds of thousands of us "just living here", without the clout to

control our neighborhoods, streets, or walls, end up blown around like branches in the wind - always moving on, intimidated by floods of cops and waves of hype about crime, "moving to opportunity" or moving out of trouble, bought out by slumlords' promises or job opportunities, always moving on...

Of course not everyone who makes these decisions is exactly the same; they all have different constituencies' interests to protect, some might actually come close to representing the needs of the people most of the time. That's not really the point though. Anyone who wants to control other peoples' lives is a suspect as far as we're concerned.

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four Baltimore residents now living at poverty level or below, the scenario becomes even grimmer, especially with the true impact of welfare reform still a few years off.

In some respects, Baltimore is no different from other declining northeastern and mid-western cities, except that the symptoms of decay are much more advanced. But one crucial difference is that Baltimore has failed to "reinvent" itself - to use a currently trendy urban planning term - over the past decade or two. The one palpable "success" that the city can point to is the revitalization of the Inner Harbor, which until recently allegedly attracted more visitors than Disneyland to a few square blocks of rather boring yuppie shops and gimmicky amusement centers. But the Inner Harbor - with its policy of "price-tag apartheid" to discourage too many locals from frequenting the waterfront malls - has had the same effect on the rest of the city's development as South Africa's Sun City had on the adjacent shantytowns. Several of the multiple hotel complexes dotting the Inner Harbor were constructed with lavish deployment of public monies - a subsidy engineered by a "creative" redirection of urban development funds in the early 70s originally intended to rehab inner city neighborhoods. At least two of the hotels have gone "bankrupt" on paper at least, leaving the city stuck with 25 million in unpaid loans. When asked why he hadn't paid one dime of the 5.9 million dollar loan made to his Omni Hotel, Henry J. Knott - one of the wealthiest men in Baltimore - huffed "It's like paying the German war debt" (Baltimore Sun, August 2, 1992)

Furthermore, while New York and L.A. have been restructured by capital as centers for international trade and finance, Baltimore has always been a second-tier city unable to lure even one Fortune 500 headquarters, let alone aspire to enter the leagues of global metropolises. And unlike Cleveland and Pittsburgh, Baltimore never generated indigenous robber baron capitalists (like the Carnegies and Mellons) who could supply a philanthropic gloss by being

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## WHO WE ARE - WHAT WE BELIEVE

**C**laustrophobia is produced and edited by a small collective of anti-authoritarians. We see this paper, along with all of the other projects we are involved in, as a small part of what we need to do to make our dreams - of a world without discrimination, coercion, or oppression of any kind - a real alternative to the ugly condition of life today.

We call ourselves anarchists, and we make no apologies for that. There is a lot of good still to be learned from the anarchist movement, whatever its problems may be. We hold strong beliefs. The same way millions of other people hold on tight to any number of other beliefs. Sometimes it's a wonder people can breathe the air around them in the city streets through all the clashes of ideologies, value systems, and religions happening all the time. To us that's healthy. Anyone with a sense of passion needs to hold on tight to their beliefs to stay afloat in the frustration that drowns poor people today.

What we're trying to say is that all

the fine points of dogma, the history, & the specifics of anarchism isn't what's important to us. We want to see people living in reality, struggling over what's real; not arguing over references that have nothing to do with their life. There are revolutionary and human principles we stand for; we might have come to them through the anarchist scene, others might have found them through religion, meditation, any kind of way. The principles are what matters.

So what is it that we believe? One, nothing about this world has to be this way. It's not "God's will", it's not the way of nature, and we *definitely* don't think it's useless trying to change a situation you can see is straight-out wrong. Struggle is the key.

What unites us as anarchists is that we recognize we share a collective rage with all of humanity. We know it's nothing as simple as a rage at 'injustice' or anything like that — what use is a concept like 'justice' anyways, except to those who want to control other people's lives? What enrages us is the understanding that this system denies us our humanity, prevents us from rec-

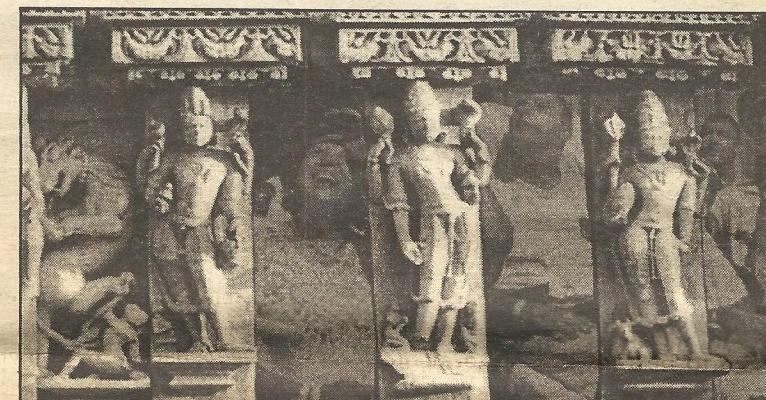
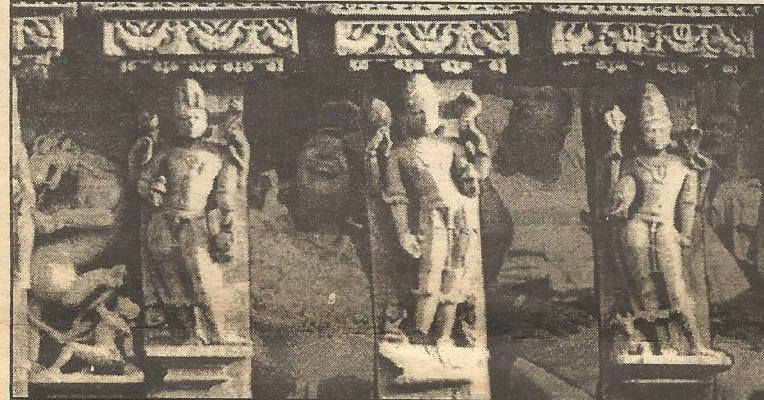
ognizing the humanity of others, and that everything we do that legitimizes the system pushes us deeper down, drives us farther apart from the people around us.

The age we live in is an age marked by division and control. It began when people started living in families under a father's control, and men were able to use power over women and children in their own family as a tool to get power over other men. Power is like junk; once you develop a craving for it, you just need more and more to satisfy you until you end up killing or dying to get what you want. That's what's been happening to our world for thousands of years. When men's power over children and women wasn't enough, they created a class structure where some men would have to work for other men. When exploiting the working classes of the land nearby wasn't enough for these lords, they would go to war to conquer other lands and enslave more subjects to work them. And when finally even that wasn't enough, these rulers started to perfect philosophies of white supremacy and all that to make all of what

they were doing seem natural, and in the process cement their control over all their subjects. Along the way, most everybody has had their life reduced to the production of wealth for rich white men. Fleshy machinery that is as expendable as scrap metal, insulted and condescended to.

We are united by a common rage, yes, but also by a common love for the human spirit and its potential, and a common desire for an unbounded life. Love and rage. Its the title of a book by Carl Harp, an anarchist revolutionary who was murdered in prison over fifteen years ago. Its also the name of one of the most influential anarchist organizations in North America today. Those two words, better than any political statement could, represent what we stand for, and what our comrades have been struggling and dying for over hundreds of years.

We believe in living life to the fullest, in developing all of the humanity that exists inside all of us. We believe that no one is free while others are oppressed. We believe that through struggle, the new life will be born.



## A few things you need to know about urban policy...

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What we're trying to do is contribute to an ethic: understanding just what it is 'they're' trying to do to our neighborhoods, our streets, and our lives, and of finding specific ways and strategies of resisting that in day-to-day life.

If you're thinking about sending your kids to school, you need to know what the school vouchers program and the state control board are gonna mean for the city's public schools, what the attacks on the Stadium School and homeschoilers mean for the alternatives to public schools, and you need to make sure to let your kids know exactly what the system's interests are in keeping them uneducated so that they can avoid falling into that trap.

If you're a graffiti artist, you need to know which neighborhoods are being yuppified and whitewashed and which ones are being allowed to crumble and what areas community struggle is going on in, and you need to see your work both as creative explosion and — as the enemy sees it — as mindless destruction, and as people who aren't involved at all see it, as a minor annoyance, and you need to make these strategic decisions about where to tag and where to bomb, piecing colorful positive stuff in communities that are under attack and bombing the fuck out

of neighborhoods that are being cleaned up to kick people out of.

Whoever and wherever you are — even if you're just hustling, robbing and stealing day in day out — this should still matter to you. Just think a little bit about who your real enemies are, think about who owes you a living, and don't be scamming from other people who are just trying to stay alive same as y o u . T h a t s w h a t w e ' r e trying to say here.

With that in mind, we offer a few examples which give an indication of the direction the city and its neighborhoods are moving towards.

### From welfare to workfare

The "welfare reform" laws passed by the federal government last year require the state of Maryland to put over 13,000 Family Investment Program clients to work by October of 1998 or they will lose their benefits. This means over 8,000 people in Baltimore City alone.

What this "welfare-to-work" program means for people (mostly women, mostly people of color) who live through it is working a full-time job as a filing clerk, janitor, school bus aide, child care worker, or whatever, and getting paid as low as \$30 a week — then on top of all that, having your benefits check cut by that same amount! And what the program means for the people

already working 1 o w - wage jobs is that a lot of people will get laid off (its a lot cheaper to fire all your \$6 an hour em-

ployees and take on new people for \$1.50 an hour) and for the rest, wages will be driven down pretty damn far through the floor. The Economic Policy Institute released statistics estimating that the going wage in the jobs this was going to affect would drop nine percent, from an average of \$6.14 an hour to an average \$5.58. (Not to mention the wages lost by people that get laid off, or whose contracts don't get

renewed, etc., etc.)

### 'Empowering' who? & just who 'benefits'?

One of the most obvious signs of Baltimore's attempt to prettify itself are the numerous federally funded "Empowerment Zones" and the locally designated middle-class "Benefits Districts" complete with private security, street-cleaning programs, and 'community' events (all tailored to an pretty narrow vision of 'community', of course.)

The empowerment zones are probably the most ridiculous failure of economic development the city has seen: over the past two years the city government has gotten \$100 million in federal money, and businesses in the 'empowerment zones' have received close to \$200 million in tax breaks. The whole goal of the program is to bring businesses into decaying neighborhoods and get them to hire local neighborhood residents. Grant money gets channeled into local drug treatment programs, youth programs, and job training programs. That's all useful and good. But for areas that have been deindustrialized, locked down, and allowed to decay for decades, its gonna take a lot more than a few \$5.00 an hour jobs to give the people of a neighbor-

*continued on page 14...*

feel SAFE?  
feel EMPOWERED?  
ever wonder  
who BENEFITS?

"Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's: twenty-three blows of the dagger." — Gianfranco Sanguinetti

## Baltimore Lockdown

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"committed" to the city. Put simply, in post-prosperity capitalism, Baltimore has very few significant options available except as a reservation-city for the poorest.

In this concept of "city-as-reservation", we can see examples of how the state intervenes to redefine and cordon public space. In Baltimore, this has taken place in the creation and implementation of downtown revitalization plans. A quasi-public agency known as the Downtown Business Partnership (DTP) was set-up by business interests to rehab the declining downtown area. (The only "public" aspect of the DTP is in its appetite for public dollars - without public accountability). Downtown businesses assessed themselves an extra tax hike to hire a small army of safety guides to patrol the streets and provide security (broadly defined as anything from directing lost tourists to reporting crimes).

Since the downtown area is also a popular hangout for the homeless, the visibly destitute have been particular targets in a series of micro-level moves designed to make it more difficult for them to loiter in public areas. Below are some examples I have observed:

- Benches around Lexington Market, (a lively public market used by a predominately Black working class clientele) suddenly disappeared over night to be replaced several months later by an ominous blue futuristic robocop type structure imported from Japan where the police can silently surveil the adjacent streets. City officials claimed that "syringes" had been found in the vicinity of the benches. By this standard,

virtually every park and institution could be shut down as well.

- In a more recent development, dozens of center-city intersections now have hidden video cameras installed providing 24 hour monitoring of all public activity.

- For at least two to three years, all the public water fountains in the downtown area have been mysteriously turned off, again to subtly discourage loitering by those too poor to purchase cold drinks from local merchants - perhaps yet another bone tossed to placate business interests?

- A volunteer soup line run by a local church on Sundays next to City Hall began to attract lines stretching nearly two city blocks. On the complaints of ONE lawyer, who stated he felt "threatened" by the presence of so many poor people when attempting to enter his office on Sundays, the church was directed to set up its feeding site two blocks away, at a site conveniently under an expressway, where the visible spectacle of hundreds of people lined up waiting to be fed could not be seen, thus tacitly sparing city officials any potential embarrassment.

- A small paved-over concrete park with benches located near the two largest missions in the city and which was used as a resting area by homeless men waiting to enter the missions was transformed within a 24 hour period to a green space, with hods of grass brought in by city workers to cover the concrete. All the benches were removed.

This list of micro-level tactics used to shape the use of public space in Baltimore is for sure far from exhaustive. But it complements and refines a more basic bifurcation made after the 68 riots when expressways were constructed to separate the edges of the downtown

business district from the surrounding ghettos, to avoid the situation existing in 1968, where members of the business class were trapped downtown since an exit to the suburbs then meant having to travel through an inner city in flames. And such micro-level tactics have been applied in the downtown precisely because Baltimore's downtown area is a cross-class arena, where a certain discretion in shaping public space must be exercised. In the poorer districts of Baltimore, less subtle tactics are used. Large parts of the inner city have been declared "drug free" zones and converted into quasi-militarized zones where police can freely arrest anyone "loitering".

Although seemingly trivial — most people living here have been completely unaware of the changes I described above — these micro-level alterations are but a small part of broader trends toward excluding sectors of the popu-

lation from formal economic and social rights, including the right to congregate and use public space. If the safety net is being dismantled and varying levels of precariousness and insecurity enforced, then the integrating role of the state likewise begins to evaporate and the authoritarian role expanded. But public space under capitalism has always been a contested battleground, from the original Enclosures to the American south, as Robin Kelly demonstrated brilliantly in the "Race Rebels" chapter on informal resistance on the Montgomery bus system, to cite just one example. There is no reason to think that things will be any different in future struggles either.

## Just a Refugee

BY SHAKA SHAKUR

Gary, Indiana is not unlike de typical refugee kamp sprawled across de landscape of some third world countries. Only instead of searching for firewood for de kamp fire, instead of lugging buckets of water to wash and cook in, we have brothas and sistas diggin in dumpsters, panhandling and pulling jack moves.

Instead of being plagued by diseases such as Ebola, Malaria, Dysentery, etc. we are plagued by epidemics of AIDS, all forms of cancer crack addiction, high blood pressure and just generally plagued by de disease of death. Death itself has now become a disease that all too many of our youth are catching.

Instead of living in tents or shanties with no running water, de majority live in urban concrete jungles, existing inside dilapidated locked down apartment buildings waiting for a disaster to happen. Rat infested fire traps that kill so many kids and elderly people every year, especially in de winter season when folks are trying to stay warm.

Yeah a refugee kamp, brothas and sistas migrating from one part of de city to another. Some trying to scramble away from de reactionary violence of street organizations (gangs), some trying to scramble to de suburbs because they can no longer stand to be amongst their own. Some scrambling to where capitalist commodities are sold in abundance, where all de stores and malls are,

where all de critical services are. None are in de ghetto/kolony. And lastly, many are migrating towards where de drug markets are more lucrative - either they are dealers contributing to de problem or victims caught up in a white blizzard of crack cocaine and genocide.

Warlords, landlords, hospital wards, and country morgues. Where does it end? Running from house to house, city to city, state to state, trying to escape de madness dat you had no power to create and yet, you have de power to collectively stop it.

Killer kkkops, mindless robots, and drugs that make babies hearts stop. Tell me, where does it end? Sell-out politicians who only work for de morticians. Too many sisters concerned with de beautician while our kids die of malnutrition. Too many brothers chasing after that Benz, instead of trying to be responsible men.

Damn! Tell me where does it end? Trapped in a refugee kamp not unlike those in Kigali, Somalia, Ethiopia, Bosnia. Wasteland, free-fire zone, no substance, no life, no harmony - only a death affirming reality.

Trapped like rats in a maze. Starving for power and that which nurtures life, only to be denied and left to feed on self and kind. A terrordome left to explode. Brothas and sistas got to create some liberated zones. Fear got to be conquered and a stand taken. When does it end? When we organize ourselves and put a stop to it. If not now - when?

Shaka Shakur is a revolutionary New Afrikan political prisoner held in the state of Indiana. He was sent down as a youth on an erroneous robbery charge, and became part of the New Afrikan Independence Movement as a prisoner. Since then he has been in the forefront of struggle that has at a number of times rocked the prison camps and brought unity to those oppressed within. He has the possibility of being released as soon as this August and we encourage you to write to his support group to see how you can help: Shaka Shakur Defense Committee P.O. Box 72017 Milwaukee, WI 53212. Also feel free to write Shaka with any thoughts comments or questions: Shaka Shakur #28443, P.O. Box 557 Westville, IN 46391. More of his writings are available from the Defense Committee.

# BALTIMORE



# EMPOWERMENT?

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"He who causes another to become powerful brings about his own ruin." - Niccolo Machiavelli

# Chase them crazy baldheads out of the town

## Interview with a former anti-racist skinhead

So you were with the Unity Skins and back a couple years ago there was a nazi skinhead scene?

Yeah, there was a scene in Baltimore. That was back in like '91 through like early '94. It was pretty big but the kids they were just in it cause they thought it was a cool thing and they liked punk music but they didn't know what 'Aryan Resistance' was about or what Nazis were really about. The main skinhead guys would go out and say "Yeah, come hang out" and they'd give 'em tattoos and all this shit. And they would have them do patrols, drive around and look for people to fuck with.

Who mostly did they look for to fuck with?

Well, they'd drive around and look for black guys and they'd drive around Patterson Park, and if they saw the male prostitutes in there they'd try to fuck with them. Just anyone they had a chance to, or anyone who gave them a dirty look, they'd fuck with.

Who were the main skinhead dudes?

Just a couple guys, the guy who had owned Mr Bigs War Party owned the building and brought all these skinheads in. He used to own this black magic shop called Wizards that got closed down cause all these churches wanted him closed down. So then he moved to Highlandtown and opened up this biker shop [Mr Bigs War Party] but then all of a sudden the biker shop had all of this nazi shit in it. So me and a couple of my friends went in and broke some windows and left some

spray paint all over the place. That's what you got to do to get rid of nazis.

What other type of stuff did you all do?

We'd go anywhere they were, a group of them, and just fight em. Be like "get the fuck out of here" and if they wouldn't we'd beat the fuck out of them with clubs and shit, just to get them out of the neighborhoods cause they were fucking shit up. Ignorant assholes, that's all they are.

Is that mainly where they were based at, Patterson Park and Highlandtown?

Well, yeah, there was a lot of them around Highlandtown, but there were some in other parts of town, like Hampden always has big skinhead shit cause its all "white trash" up there. Hamilton had some, most parts of town had it. Its really not that prevalent anymore. People aren't gonna take it anymore. People aren't gonna put up with that shit, with nazis walking around their neighborhoods. They'll go out and say "fuck y'all" and beat the fuck out of 'em. They don't want that shit in their neighborhood.

Did the cops ever get between things?

Yeah, I was arrested before for assault, and I had a billy club in my sleeve. I went down to the police station. I got out a couple hours later. The cops really don't do anything. They just tell the skinheads to go away. They're not really going to arrest them for hanging out. The cops really don't do shit. If they saw a group of skinheads walking

down the street they wouldn't do shit cause they couldn't. But cops—if they see a bunch of black kids walking down the street—they automatically make them go to their knees and frisk them.

So what was the Unity Crew like? How many people were in it? What other stuff did you do?

It was like maybe 15 guys who just hung out and listened to punk music. We'd go out to shows, hard core shows, and we knew skinheads would be at the shows. We never really went looking to fight but if it came to it we would. We just wanted to stop all that stupid shit they were talking.

yeah, like how did anti-racism arise?

Well I myself am half jewish and I wasn't gonna deal with that Nazi shit cause I have no tolerance for it. I think the only good nazi is a dead one, that's the only way it is. They got their stupid ideas that they think are right, you can't talk to those people, you have to show them that they're wrong.

Were you all into some other type of politics?

Some were into socialism. Most of us were just like 'fuck capitalism' and knew that the government didn't help anybody and screwed people over. That's most of it.

So it was an all male, all white crew?

No, there were some girls, and some hispanic guys, and basically we were just hanging out. We would go to shows and go to parties. We didn't go out just to fight. We were just hanging

out. It was just like a club.

You already mentioned some about how people don't put up with nazi shit anymore, how close do you think most white neighborhoods are to spawning it again?

I don't think very close because even most white neighborhoods aren't going to tolerate it. I think in the neighborhoods, it's different now, but it is possible it could start again but if it did, it would have to end again. There would have to be something to happen again to make it end.

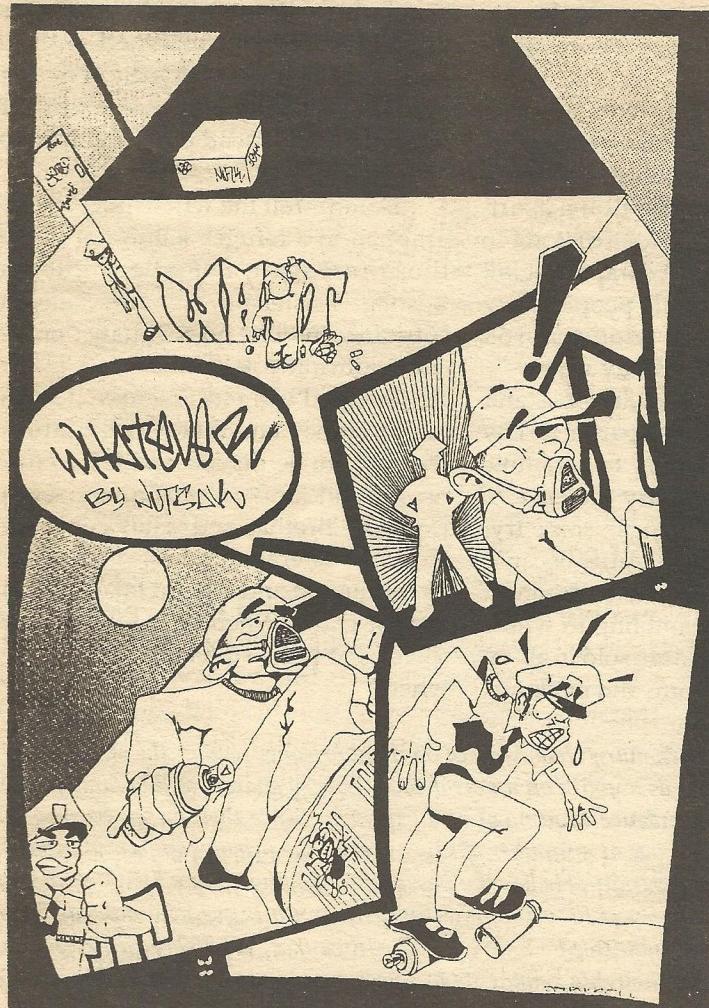
...back then hardcore music was taking about nazi shit, with like oi. But now flyers for shows are like "we're here to have a show, we don't want to have any racist, sexist, drunk assholes at this show." I think it's cool how the hard core scene has come together.

You mentioned that there was jewish crews?

They were basically doing what we were doing, but some jewish skinheads were like into that superiority thing too, like jewish people are superior. The way I was into it wasn't like anybody was superior, I just thought people shouldn't be fucked with and the nazis are stupid. Like white power, its just a 'race'... you should be proud about what you are and what you've done. It doesn't matter if you're white, if you're a fucking asshole you shouldn't be proud of yourself.

Got anything else to say?

If nazis think they're going to come back into this town, they're wrong. And we just got to keep everything real.



[Cartoon stolen without permission from Nite Crawlers graffiti magazine]

## Cross-burning in Remington

BY A 'REMINGTON MOBSTER'

On Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, an 8-foot tall wooden cross was burned in a trash can in Wyman Park off of 30<sup>th</sup> Street in Remington. The nazi-ass wankers who did it wouldn't dare show their faces down in Remington, so if anyone knows them kick their asses for us, ok? Meanwhile, its up to the people of Remington, Hampden, and the rest of the city to sort through the tensions this kind of incident brings to the surface and take sides on all the questions it touches on.

The most plausible explanation we've heard for the incident is that it had to do with a neighborhood fight going on between Remington and Hampden. Remington, despite all its troubles, is a neighborhood where all kinds of people live right around each other (although it wasn't just as recently as six or seven years ago); just across the park, on the other hand, Hampden is still for the most part as white as a Appalachia mountain town. In the ongoing graffiti wars, Hampden kids haven't been above writing swastikas or 'KKK' next

continued next page...

"As long as you think you're white, there's no hope for you" — James Baldwin

# the Language of Whiteness

BY SEIZURE

The media got busy at the end of last year when an Oakland, CA school board made a policy of validating and not repressing the dialect of Black students in an effort to help teach "standard English", i.e. middle class white English. To further people's sense of scandal the idea was put out that the schools were not only permitting Ebonics, but teaching it. The "debate" we were shown involved a number of assimilated middle class Blacks expressing their outrage at such a thing as a people's popular language being permitted in public schools. Nowhere that we saw was it permitted to express unrepentant pride in the fluent and spontaneous voice of one's people. Then there was the talk radio, the white rock stations, and the workplaces where Ebonics became a running joke.

So after one recent comment at work I asked this other white dude why everyone acts like Ebonics is such a joke. His answer was, "Cause it is" and then he went into how he's from Nebraska and people talk different there and it's not considered a different language so how come Black people get their own language?

"It's alright if they want to talk however they want to, but they don't have to make an issue out of it. If you want a job you have to speak proper English. If someone came in here talking like that I wouldn't hire them to be a waiter. I mean, Black people were freed from slavery and now they should stop complaining, they're free."

"Why don't you go over to West Baltimore and see who's free!"

"Yeah, well sure. But are you free?"

"No, I ain't free. That's why I have solidarity with other people who know they're not free and will do something about it!"

Black people have something

he doesn't and he's jealous. Yet he's not willing to do what is necessary to get it. If he can't act independently of social authority then he doesn't want to see anybody else doing it. That little argument and the "outrage" of Ebonics get at some basic things about whiteness in this country. White people are jealous and resentful of Black people's independence from the dominant capitalist culture of Amerikkka. What we're interested in is not what educational policy should be followed in Oakland public schools—that is a debate that we as whites have no place in—but how the system has manipulated the situation and how many whites have responded.

If you go back to the origins of this country, you can see that "white" people were made, and chose to be made, into a class of what in a different context Malcolm X called "house negroes". We were dressed in the thrown-off threads of the master class, taken into the master's house as loyal servants, treated to the privileges of citizens. Assembled together as a white caste, the different proletarians of Europe who came to this country gave up just about everything that could allow us to truly resist the exploiters. So now in this way the whites who have "everything" stare with a frequently bitter envy at the wealth of those who have maintained a dynamic and creative identity through hundreds of years of fierce exploitation and oppression: they simultaneously hate and admire Black folks.

So jump back to the past again, the poor fucked-over folks from Europe only became white as a result of demanding they not be black anymore. White-

ness is the inheritance of an age-old sell-out. But it's not just distant history either. For the most part, white working folks continue to demand their due as whites and resist any possibility of joining the ranks of their non-white kin.

Take this example from here in Baltimore. Two of the building blocks of the 20th century Amerikkkan city—the all-white working-class garrison and the Black ghetto/projects—came into conflict when urban planners for the Mayor and the cities leading capitalists proposed moving 1300 families from the recently demolished high rise projects to the counties. Dundalk, perhaps the poorest white district affected by the plan, rose up in vehement protest. Even after the ACLU plan had been settled on, over 1,500 whites packed an auditorium to denounce the plan. When the plan was first proposed the Dundalk county council representative suggested that people living in projects "would need to be taught to take baths and not to steal." One Dundalk woman writing to the Sun tried to defend her kkkommunity: "We are not uneducated racists, but are committed to our communities and will stand up for them and our values. This agreement is against everything we work for and teach our children."

But before getting any deeper into racist hysterics it's important to realize that Dundalk would likely receive only about 2 families per year due to its already high poverty level. In reality there is little to the ACLU plan which would affect life in Dundalk. So why all the white noise? If being white is about being separate and raised above all the different peoples that inhabit this world then that sense of being separate and superior must be experienced on a regular basis for it to survive. It is a so-

cial ritual that is essential to being white. Of course, politicians are masters of this type of psychology and it was the local political machinery that organized these mass meetings. At the same time, it's not as if the local citizenry are mere pawns; over the years they have shown themselves amenable to taking plenty of independent action. The protest rallies were especially indignant over a provision of the plan which calls for special prosecution of "unlawful opposition" to the program, i.e. vigilantism. Dundalk's uproar not only served to reinforce a shared sense of whiteness among its citizens, but it also must have been aimed at any Black and other non-whites who might have considered moving in, whether or not they were part of the ACLU plan.

But whites 'defending' their distinction as whites means attacking the independence of Blacks. Perhaps whites would like to see Black people become simply the more exploited version of themselves—quiet, obedient, patriotic, and submissive. Then the dull guards of whiteness wouldn't need to be disturbed by the voices beneath them sending shouts out to life, freedom and resistance, resonating in their children's dreams.

There's no reason Blacks should give a shit about what white people think of what they do. Or ask for white approval. Because of the choices white people have made, Black people's struggle for freedom has to be a good part distinct from white people. That fact gets expressed as nationalism. And once again white people will defend being white and next get all indignant about "separatism". Who separated from who? So as soon as more white people start getting over being white, then new relationships can develop between people. But for now, let us pale skin folks do two things:

support all freedom struggles in the Black communities, and break all treaties with our masters. Burn down the master's house, no more guarding it!

## roots to action

anti-racist news and perspectives

### Anti-Racist Action

The Anti-Racist Action network involves more than 25 groups in cities across North America who are united around a few basic principles:

1. **We go where they go.** Whenever fascists are organizing or active in public, we're there. We don't believe in ignoring them or staying away from them. Never let the nazis have the streets.

2. **Don't rely on the cops or the courts to do our work.** This doesn't mean that we don't ever go to court. But we must rely on ourselves to protect ourselves and to stop the fascists.

3. **Non-sectarian defense of other anti-**

fascists.

In the Anti-Racist Action network (ARA-NET), we have lots of groups and individuals. We don't always agree about everything, and we have a right to differ openly. But in this movement an attack on one is an attack on us all. We stand behind each other.

4. ARA-NET intends to do the hard work necessary to build a broad, strong movement against racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, discrimination against the disabled, the oldest, the youngest, and the weakest of our people. We intend to win.

As the Claustrophobia collective, we are in general support of all of these goals and hope to see the ARA network continue to grow as it has over the last few years. We encourage anyone interested to get involved. A local contact is ARA Baltimore / P.O. Box 39156 / Baltimore, MD 21212.

# Descent Into Hell by the Corner of Madison and Fallsway

## The Maryland Correctional Adjustment Center

From 1989 through 1991, the Maryland Division of Corrections introduced a new slice of hell to define the "end of the line" of the state penal railroad. The MCAC, a newly constructed state of the art prison overtly modeled after USP Marion was built to house 288 inmates under 22-hour a day isolation in 65 square foot cells. It operated with essentially no outside recreation for inmates, non-contact visits (inmates at the MCAC can only get less than three hours of visits a month anyway), and conditions of 22 or more hour a day lock-down - "innovations" which reflected the national trend during the 1980s of using total or small-group isolation, denial of inmates' rights to own any kind of personal property, and lack of human contact as experiments in "behavior modification" on selected groups of inmates.

The problem of building a supermax prison in a central city landscape, in a city with an imprisonment rate as out of control as Baltimore's, was a real challenge for prisoncrats. Contrary to the general trend towards building prisons in rural, mostly white areas, where the established racial tensions and stereotypes of "city folks" can be exploited easily to maintain conflicts where guards inevitably have the undisputed upper hand, the MCAC opened into a purely neocolonial terrain, where the definition of "guard" and "prisoner" - and those from the "prison" and "outside" - were not so nearly well defined. The prisoners and guards were both nearly homogeneously African, the surrounding neighborhood (if that word has any social nuances anymore) is African and poor, and badly scarred from a thirty-year campaign of spatial deconcentration that still rages today. It took several years for the strategists at the Division of Corrections finally to establish near-total control over the inmates at the new joint.

A prisoner arriving at the MCAC fresh out of Pelican Bay in California in the early '90s wrote:

*This supermax, in comparison to Pelican Bay, is the difference between day and night... I think, no I know for a fact, why we don't get the kind of crazy treatment like at Pelican Bay. It's mainly because the inmates know most of the guards here because they live right here in Baltimore; either they know them personally or someone in their family. Another reason we don't have that kind of abuse... is because of the location of the prison. This prison location is about four blocks from a major housing project. Could you picture them jumpin on someone here and one of these guys getting word to his homeboys to spray this place with bullets, or maybe setting some cars on fire, or maybe having someone go to the guard's house.*

The general experience of prisoners

before '92 or '93 was that the prison was relatively mild, compared to what it has since become or to other control units in the country. At least some of the time guards and inmates had to relate on a human level, and as a result, there was a level of mutual respect and tolerance. Fights between inmates would be broken up by guards and, while the individuals involved would be punished, it generally wouldn't be used as an excuse for a beating or a total lock-down. When tensions ran high, there were usually outlets for prisoners to assert some self-respect and resistance and still emerge from the situation with their bones and dignity mostly intact. When things got too out of hand, prisoners had the power of the between the bars organizing that had been built up: friends "outside" could be counted on to "straighten out" guards who got out of line. All of these were obstacles to state control which would soon be surmounted or eliminated.

One sunny morning in July of 1995 a curious, nervous crowd gathered to witness the highly publicized implosion of the Lafayette Courts housing project complex. It was the "end of an era in the city's housing policy", as the media proclaimed proud and loud. News articles played up the incidence of drugs and crime in the projects, the rat population which had established itself there and the structural weakness of the buildings themselves - as if the main motivation was concern for the residents there. As of a couple of days before the demolition, the city had not found new housing for nearly a third of the residents, so the concerns were clearly not humanitarian. Where, but in the mouths of politicians does concern for the safety of a people lead to their homes being blown up, leaving them homeless in the streets? The demolition had more to do with a general plan for redevelopment/decimation of the Old Town-Lower Homewood area of the city, which includes the prison complex. It fit nicely into the prison authorities plans to break up the strongest source of support that prisoners had.

The steady breaking up of the outside contacts opens the way for an escalation of violence inside the prison, as a way of letting people know that the balance of power is shifting. A major turning point for many prisoners was the beating of Bruce Wise in the spring of 1994. With his hands and ankles in shackles, he was beaten by as many as a dozen officers at once and repeatedly slammed against the wall. This and other similar incidents were basically used to terrorize prisoners out of any kind of resistance. Once the guards let it be known that any kind of resistance would be met, not with human response, but with dozens of fists, boots, night sticks, riot helmets, and shots of

tear gas, there were few prisoners who were willing to stand up for their rights, except in the most desperate situation.

The level of brutality exercised over prisoners was enough to keep control for the most part. No prisoners wanted to expose themselves to this kind of beating. Nonetheless for a terrorist strategy to be effective, the threat had to be restated constantly. Prisoners had to see beatings - often hardly provoked - to be reminded of the seriousness of what they faced should they forget their "place." Several prisoners have been seriously assaulted by guards far out of proportion to whatever their actual "offense" might have been. One example: On 24 October 1995, Joseph Jenkins (Rahim Abdullah Shaheed) was dragged out of his cell in a choke hold and beaten and poked by several guards with nightsticks and dragged down the length of the corridor. Four other officers joined in the beating, kicking him and slamming his face into the wall. The video camera, which is supposed to record all conflicts between prisoners and guards, was shut off during this incident, the only record being Rahim's blood on the floor, the bruises and scars covering his body and a nightstick broken during the beating. We feel that one step outside activists need to take is fighting to prevent any more such blatantly terroristic attacks. Until that point prisoners will be prevented from any kind of constructive organizing from pure fear and the supermax will continue to produce tortured scarred, twisted neuroses for use in the war on the families, neighborhoods, and institutions that make up the urban underclass - African, Native, Chicano, and white. We are keeping a record of all the incidents of brutality we hear of, in order to monitor the situation as well as we can; and we hope that we and other activists will be prepared to respond effectively when another prisoner is beaten, as has happened so often.

To a degree, the MCAC's campaign of terrorism worked. It broke many prisoners' spirits to the point where they were no longer recognizable as the human beings they once were. Walking around the Mount Vernon neighborhood of Baltimore, the prison complex is visible across the highway down the hill to the east. You can see the fortress towers of the Maryland Penitentiary and the beige soulless boxes that are the new Classification and Diagnostic Center, but the "worst of the worst" are out of sight for the most part - except if you look around at some of the most broken homeless people, burnt-out and wide-eyed, hanging out on the street corners, in front of the 7-11, in fear

of anyone who passes by. These people were not always like this. A lot of them have done time in the torture cells and been released to society, weak, broken, unable to escape more than a few blocks from the torturer, let alone "rehabilitate into society" or any other such nonsense. One prisoner wrote after finally getting a transfer out of the MCAC:

Everybody knows the Supermax Prisoners when they are transferred out to a lower security level because of the extreme paranoia and the enormous amount of weight loss. When I was transferred out of Supermax after three years I found myself walking back and forward and brothers would ask me what was wrong. I would say that old habits die hard. I walked back and forth like that to think, to exercise, and to keep warm while the cold blowers were being used to force prisoners to stay in their beds.

It is testimony to the strength of the human spirit that even these conditions were not enough to stifle prisoners' creativity entirely. In November of 1990 - less than a year after the prison opened - life-term prisoner Harold Benjamin Dean became the first inmate to escape from a U.S. control unit when he crawled out through a cell window and escaped to begin a new life as a free man in the Midwest. This escape was only the first of many challenges to the DoC public position that building Marion-style control units was the most efficient, safest, most humane way of dealing with the state's exploding prison population. Although the DoC could still point to a decrease in inmate initiated violence over the old South Wing (prisoners could rarely even socialize, let alone plan to take any kind of power into their hands), the claims that the MCAC would be more humane, cleaner, better for inmates' rehabilitation (and so forth) all had to be forgotten or ignored.

The ever-present threat of brutality creates a general atmosphere that is one of thousands of minor violations of prisoners' humanity. What can they do if for no apparent reason, the guards on duty purposefully slow down the daily routine schedule and as a result they do not get to take their daily shower or recreation time? These minor everyday grievances, for which there is no real way of redressing, are a continual assault on prisoners' sense of self-worth.

(This essay is an excerpt from a longer pamphlet, Total Control in the "Free State", which describes the use of control units in Maryland in the context of national trends in imprisonment toward the use of lockdown, isolation, and sensory deprivation to break prisoners' spirits and politics. A recently revised edition of the pamphlet is available from the local representatives of the National Campaign to Stop Control Unit Prisons: P.O. Box 22203 / Baltimore, MD 21203.)

A bimonthly discussion bulletin dealing with strategic issues facing the anti-prison movement is being produced by us, along with other anarchist prison activists. Those interested should contact ABC / P.O. Box 22534 / Baltimore, MD 21203...

"Once we take the bible seriously, we can only say at the end, 'Hail Satan'" — Mikhail Bakunin

# Eddie Conway nearing opportunity for new trial

One of the longest-held political prisoners in the country, veteran Black Panther Marshall "Eddie" Conway, is nearing an opportunity for a new trial here in Maryland. Eddie was serving as a leading member of the Baltimore Black Panther party chapter when he was arrested in April 1970 and charged with the fatal shooting of a Baltimore police officer and the attempted murder of two others. He has always maintained his innocence and many people believe that his imprisonment was a result of the federal government's "counterintelligence" program against the Black Panthers, the whole of the Black liberation movement, and the radical left more broadly. Hundreds of people remain in prison on charges fabricated by the U.S. government in its war against the people's struggles which grew in the 1960's and 1970's. Geronimo Pratt's release this month was only the most recent of many examples where the courts have been forced to admit to the existence and extent of COINTELPRO — now Eddie is hoping to force the courts

to examine the nature of the charges against him.

Currently, a habeas corpus writ (which is Eddie's last chance for legal release) sits in the Federal Court of Appeals waiting on a July 11th decision as to whether the state will reverse Eddie's conviction, grant a new trial, or refuse to hear the case altogether. Our task at this point in the struggle is to keep the issues alive; make sure that this case is not kept silent by the media, the Sun, the Afro-American, the radio, et cetera. Readers are encouraged to do whatever is possible to publicize Eddie Conway's case. A hearing will be held sometime during July, and Eddie has invited supporters to fill the courtroom to observe and show support.

For more information, contact:

*Marshall E. Conway Support Committee  
P.O. Box 41144  
Baltimore, MD 21203-6144  
(410) 276-7221*

## Local newsletters and zines featuring voices of prisoners

*The Spirit* (The Spirit Collective c/o Shannon Murray - P.O. Box 22203 - Baltimore, MD 21203) A newsletter produced every two months by a New Afrikan prisoners' collective at the Maryland House of Corrections - Jessup. Writings by awakening revolutionaries who have discovered their humanity through

writing and found "the courage to address and to arrest the anti-community and self-hating behaviour" that plagues oppressed people everywhere today.

*Inhumane* (c/o Frank Calabrese # 248-351 / ECI / 30420 Revells Neck Road / Westover, MD) A zine about the injustices of imprisonment, anarchism, Islam, and any number of other interesting issues. Each issue features essays, interviews with prisoners, graphics, and more.

*Freedom* (c/o Sojourner Truth Farm

## Join the United Prisoners' Action Coalition!

### A STATEMENT OF PURPOSE, AND A CALL FOR SUPPORT

Dear Friend:

Probably every community in the state has needs and problems which could be met by the involvement of prisoners in a nearby institution; men and women who really need to experience the thrill of helping out. The United Prisoners' Action Coalition realizes that the time is now, in our social development, to begin recognizing this natural pool of volunteers rather than trying to forget they exist. It's time to remind the authorities that prisons are a part of communities and that those in the prisons not only came from those communities, but will one day return to them. You must, as a concerned citizen, take part in the discussions of ways prisoners can contribute to community life and towards humanity in general. Even while they're inside, we must remember that every human being needs to feel useful, and therefore, we need to present

as many opportunities as we can for prisoners to experience this usefulness also. In this way our communities become part of the rehabilitation and treatment process as it should be.

Our plea to you is that you join us and other compassionate fellow human beings fighting for the promotion and respect for human rights, whether a person is confined to prison or not. We urge you to add your name to the roster of the only coalition of its kind in Maryland concerned with such issues as human rights, prisoners' treatment, and self-help.

It is the mission of UPAC to not only reestablish in the minds of our members the importance of the United Nations towards maintaining peace, happiness, and goodwill towards men and women the world over; but to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person. This great task we undertake involves

*continued on page 9...*

School / P.O. Box 311 / Poolesville, MD 20837) The newsletter of the Prisoner Publishing Network. This is a network of conscious prisoners and supporters across the country co-ordinated by Akono Jahi, a New Afrikan organizer and writer incarcerated in the state of Indiana. The Sojourner Truth Farm School is an institution with a vision of 'connecting young people back to the natural order of things as they learn the way of the land and earthly cultivation.' They are in need of donations of money and all kinds of supplies to continue the

many projects — including the Prisoner Publishing Network — they are working on!

We encourage everyone to check out each of these publications. We need to understand what the "justice" system does to our incarcerated brothers & sisters, and appreciate the contribution they, from their own struggles, can make to our own understanding of what 'freedom' means. We distribute copies of each of these; however, we encourage you to write to the publishers directly.

## made crazy by you/ driven sane by myself

BY SHAKA N'ZINGA

made  
Crazy  
driven  
Insane.  
shoved into an Abyss  
pushed into a Hell  
which thrives  
on the misery and pain  
of its products -  
the souls of millions  
no code of conduct  
is the rule which governs  
the behavior of those  
of us who inhabit  
this Abyss  
which is one of the world's  
sickest Hells

made Crazy & driven Insane, I  
was shoved into this Abyss  
which is full of a Hell  
that calls forth  
the Insanity

(which is not a natural part of man, but is an insanity produced by that external force which—in the name of law and dis/order—intentionally and systematically dehumanizes and destroys the potential that once was there)

but somehow  
my supposed Crazy/Sick/Madness  
was in reality  
a real & correct humanistic saneness,  
which defied  
the Insanity which surrounded me.  
I, somehow, became  
a revolutionary  
New Afrikan man-child.

"DAMN THIS INSANITY-FILLED  
ABYSS"  
I screamed to myself,  
inside my head, throughout my soul,  
straight to my heart  
filled with a longing  
(and need)  
to further develop the humanity  
therein  
Ere the sickness

was allowed to set in,  
I rebelled.

Before I was made a slave,  
I raged on.

in open warfare with the oppressor,  
who lived inside my head,  
I refused to ever succumb  
to fear of change —  
a revolutionary transformation  
which is a very traumatic  
and painful transition.

I refused to lose

here I sit, not crazy mad or insane  
I just be a New Afrikan warrior  
bent on razing these  
abyss-filled hells  
called prison

which now only serve the economic  
interest of building a  
"NEW INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX"  
(with the Vietnam war came the  
"Military Industrial Complex"  
which of course  
served the interest of Big Business.  
today we have the Drug war,  
and alas, the

"Prison Industrial Complex"  
and the same Big Businesses'  
interests are being served.)

there's no insanity here  
there's nothing but love on this end  
an authentic and unselfish love  
for a  
revolutionary  
transformation  
of this sick messed-up system  
that once completed  
will give

"ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!"

Shaka N'Zinga is a New Afrikan anarchist, a revolutionary humanist, and writer presently incarcerated at the Maryland House of Corrections in Jessup, MD. He is an editor of *The Spirit*, a newsletter of radical prisoners' voices.

"The bourgeoisie had better watch out for me / all throughout this so-called nation /we don't want

**"To think that it was only a slightly serious prank.  
They are going to see quite a few more before they fall."**

Raymond "La Science" Callemin was a member of the famous Bonnot Gang and part of the French Illegalist scene around 1910-11. The illegalists were a faction of the anarchist movement which advocated and practiced robbery of the rich as both a tactic of working class rebellion and a way of life which beat working in the factories. They were vehemently opposed by other factions of the anarchist movement—some of whom even believed that stealing from your boss made you the same as the boss.

The illegalist scene culminated in the Bonnot Gang as its fullest expression. The Gang, named by the French newspapers after one member, Jules Bonnot, is worth remembering if only for the fact that they originated the getaway car. It was for the robbery of a bank courier, among a number of crimes - most of which included their trademark stolen getaway car - that "La Science" stood accused before the Court. He was found guilty and executed on the afternoon of April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1912.

We reprint a part of his statement here, not because we wish to revive the theories of the Illegalists or to promote their path. The Bonnot Gang all died at the hands of the State, which was what they, and everyone else, expected from the beginning. There are a number of things we dislike about the Illegalists — their purist individualism and their scorn for the masses of people, for examples. But we print this because of the clarity with which he defends his rebellion and the very idea of rebellion itself. Beyond questions of strategy, Raymond La Science's rebellion is our rebellion.

Every being comes into the world with a right to live a real life. This is indisputable, for it is nature's law. Also I ask myself why, on this earth, there are people who expect to have all the rights. They give the pretext that they have money, but if one asks them where they got their money from, what do they answer? As for myself, I answer as follows: "I give no one the right to impose his own wishes, regardless of the pretext given. I don't see why I wouldn't have the right to eat those grapes or those apples just because they are the property of Mr. X...What did he do that I have not that lets him alone gain an advantage? I answer nothing and consequently I have the right to make use of things according to my need and if he wants to prevent me forcibly I will revolt and against his strength I will oppose my own because, finding myself attacked, I will defend myself by any means at my disposal."

That's why, to those who will say that they have money and, thus, I must obey them, I will say, "When you are able to demonstrate that part of the whole represents the whole, that this is another earth than that on which you have been born, as I have, and that this is another sun than the one which lights the way and makes plants grow and fruit ripen, when you have proven that,

## The Trial Statement of Raymond "La Science" Callemin

I will give you the right to keep me from living"—because, well, where DOES money come from: from the earth, and silver is one part of the earth transformed into a metal that came to be called silver and one part of the world monopolized this silver and, in using this metal, violently forced the rest of the world to obey it. For this end, they invented all kinds of torture systems such as prisons, etc.

Why does this minority which 'has' seem stronger than the majority which "has not"? Because this majority is ignorant and lacking in energy; it allows all sorts of caprices on the part of those who 'have' by simply slouching its shoulders at each new caprice that comes up. These people are too faint-hearted to revolt themselves and, even better, if amongst them there are some who leave the flock, the others hold them back[...]

It is due to all of these things that I have revolted, it's because I didn't want to live the life of the present society, because I didn't want to wait until death to be alive that I defended myself against my oppressors by all means at my disposition. From my earliest days, I knew the authority of the father and mother and before I was even old enough to understand what it all meant, I rebelled against that authority, just as I did against the authority of the educational system.

I was thirteen at the time. I started working; when I began to experience and understand what was going on around me. I also became familiar with life and social abuse; I saw people I found to be bad and corrupt, and told

myself: "I must find a way to get out of this shit of bosses, workers, bourgeoisie, judges, officers, and others; all of these people disgust me, some because they allow themselves to go through the motions of life without really doing a thing." Not wanting to be exploited or, on the other hand, to be an exploiter, I stole from the shelves of stores, without getting too far ahead, the first time I was arrested I was seventeen; I was sentenced to three months in prison; and then I understood justice as it really was[...] To have undergone what I did in the name of 'Justice', that is, prison, made me all the more rebellious[...]

At the end of three months of work there, I was distraught and exhausted and yet I had to keep going for fear of dying of hunger, seeing that what I earned was just enough to pay for my most basic needs, but to look at what was going on the other side of the street, I felt that my boss was reaping all the benefits of MY work and what was he doing to deserve THAT? Nothing, other than reminding me that I had arrived ten minutes late or criticizing my work and threatening me with losing my job if my work didn't improve.

Anyway, as I don't like doing the same thing all the time (I don't think of myself as a machine), I would have liked to teach myself, to know lots of things, to develop my intelligence, as well as my body, in one word, to become a being capable of moving out in all directions as he pleases, needing as little as possible from others around him. But to get to that point, I needed time, I needed books. How could I get

those things while remaining so tied to my work? It was impossible for me to pull these things together as I had to eat and in order to do that I had to work and for whom? For a boss [...] I had to work a lot in order to fall short of satisfying even my most basic needs. I came to the same conclusions in looking at the situations all around me; I saw nothing but poverty for those who worked at my side and, worse, all these miserable people, instead of trying to get out of the rut they were in, dug their heels in and drank themselves into oblivion, thereby casting their faculties of reason to the wind.

I saw all that, i saw the exploiter getting satisfied by the whole thing, and worse, I saw him pay for rounds of drinks for men who had already drunk too much; and for good reason, for while they got smashed, the workers couldn't think and that's what was necessary to keep them under the authority of the exploiting bosses[...]

I left Paris when I was nineteen and a half, because I saw that everything in the city was becoming regimented. I understood what the words republic, liberty, equality, fraternity, flag, country, and so on meant. I mulled these words over, what part I was to take in all of this and I also spoke with my friends about the supposed valor of that social vocabulary that surrounded me; I understood the horrible hypocrisy represented by the language of the state. It's all nothing more than a religion, like God's religion that gets slopped out to the world's religious folk. They say to

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### True Crime Stories (for the Class-Conscious)

Here are two stories for all who understand that the struggle for freedom is not often legal and that at the same time crime needs to become dedicated to the struggle for freedom.

Just a few years ago, behind the train station, on the other side of the Moat (JFX) from Mt. Vernon, a block of rowhouse was being converted into high priced condos. That block of St. Paul Street had previously been home to a number of half-way houses, boarding houses and other low-rent joints. But because of the block's proximity to the train station the developers had hoped to establish a little community of MARC-riding yuppies. This would also serve as a beach head in the perennial struggle to extend the yuppie corridor from Mt. Vernon to Hopkins/Charles Village, the several blocks around North Avenue being contested territory.

So the big old row houses got renovated and the MARC-riding yuppies started moving in and a huge sign was put up announcing the availability of luxury condos. The sign was successful in attracting interest in the area as pretty soon several spectacular burglaries took place where, in the middle of the day, as the condos' inhabitants walked the corridors of Capitol Hill or

had lunch in DuPont Circle, several apartments worth of state-of-the-art commodities were carted-off.

That quickly brought an end to this particular development scheme. The yuppies moved out, rents dropped and the block is now back to half-way houses, boarding houses, etc. like the neighborhood around it, except on this particular block all the houses have been renovated.

In case you didn't get the pleasure of reading the newspaper back in March when the Courthouse doors were stolen we'll retell the story for you.

The two 300 lb solid brass doors which are 'worth' \$30,000 each and guard the hall of justice were stolen one night. The building maintenance manager reportedly raised the bright prospect that "if they can take the doors they can take the building".

The sheriff was not so happy about the whole affair. He is quoted as saying "Whoever took the doors, we are going to find them. We are going to arrest them. We are going to prosecute them. These are the type of people we need to remove from society for a long, long time." However, to date no one has been removed from society for this unspeakable act of evil. Perhaps these doors now guard the abode of a wiley den of thieves. Or maybe they will show up as barricade material during the next great Baltimore street revolt.

## United Prisoners Action Coalition Statement

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also what we call the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and Related Recommendations of the U.N. That all people in prison in our state are not criminals, but some are victims of circumstance and in other instances some are "prisoners of conscience." We also work towards ending overcrowding in our prisons, and for the implementation of prisoners' treatment programs designed and supported through membership donations and various other means of support. However, we place special emphasis on the plight of the African Americans in prisons because 80% of Maryland's 27,000 prison population is African American. At the same time we constitute only 24.9% of the state's total population.

### In Service of Their Country

These prisons are sociological communities in which a large number of men must be controlled by a small number—the larger number only having the potential power of their numbers. If ever unified, they could threaten the authority of the minority. For purposes of security it is essential that the population remain divided. To that end it is necessary that a sense of community be discouraged, and that communication among prisoners be made difficult; that leaders, natural or potential, be isolated; that passivity be encouraged and assertiveness—which is close to aggressiveness—be restricted even if it might be applied to positive ends; that self-confidence be eroded and self-doubts be engendered; that prejudices and biases which divide the community be encouraged or at least tolerated; that sources that do feed pride be restricted; that lethargy be rewarded (lethargy, lazy, indifferent, and abnormal); that individuality be obliterated; that the spirit of men and women be broken in service of obedience. All of these make sense and are psychologically sound, if the purpose is to keep large groups of men and women under the control of a small group 'in service to their country'. The fact that most of this is antithetical to the concept of building strength of character or rehabilitation and treatment which is the purported goal of imprisonment is beside the point because the purported goal is not the real goal. A Warden's job is not the rehabilitation and treatment of prisoners; it is the maintenance of order.

Many of you have asked the question without any answer, what can I do as an individual or as a member of a group or organization to stop many of the acts being forced upon prison populations in the name of law and order, and public safety? Unfortunately, many of the existing problems and confusion in these institutions are the direct result of "just laws" that unfortunately have been put into the hands of persons and

Once we reject the notion that our 'lines of flight' can or should be harmonized into a unified project of socialism and once we reject the notion that various sectors of the working class should subordinate their struggles to meet their own needs and desires to the standpoint of the trap itself, namely from an objective, scientific, technological standpoint. There are as many ways to speak of the wrecking of the Biosphere. From the standpoint of a single protagonist, Earth herself, it can be said that she is committing suicide. With mon: the rejection of capitalist domination. Capital knows this: its two protagonists, Mankind and Mother Earth, it can be said that We are murdering Her. Those of us who accept this stand-point and squirm with shame might wish we were whales. But those of us who take the stand-point of the verse: that intra-class antagonisms fuel inter-class antagonism in such a manner as to become unmanageable and that diverse projects This second protagonist, Mankind, is too diffuse. It embodies all of self-valorization and ways to avoid being constrained and harassed within capital by becoming complementary or at least mutually supportive. Between us and capital the maximization of antagonism, amongst ourselves the elaboration of a politics of difference that minimizes or eliminates antagonism. trappers, but the trapped.

Freddy Perlman, *Against His-Story, Against Leviathan* interview with Harry Cleaver, Massimo de Angelis, 1993

### In loving memory

BY SEER

How do you remember a man who was executed in cold-blood by the state? This is the question I have been asking of myself over and over this past week. Do you fix him in your memory as the eternal victim, who fought most of his adult

people to be enforced. Whether you believe it or not, this is true. Up to this point, the control of these institutions have been in the hands of officials or so-called American Religious Societies and governments on local/state and national levels. While at the same time the United States Government in accord with its constitution perpetuate a system of involuntary servitude, and slavery which is definitely contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and Related Recommendations of the United Nations, and the general concern of people as well.

Further, we must put an end to the present course in which the State is headed; that is, demanding more tax dollars from the already overburdened taxpayer in order to keep a person in prison and to build more prisons to be used as custody controlled detention centers (concentration camps). Is this consistent with the will of the taxpayer? Especially when so many of you have relatives or friends in these prisons. Nor does it represent a service of treatment and rehabilitation to the community or society from which the offender has

life against incarceration and imminent execution by a bloodthirsty state? Or as the hero, the mentor and source of strength to hundreds of loved ones, fellow prisoners, and supporters (including ourselves)? Gregory Hunt was all this, and much more, both to those who knew and loved him and to others who watched the media circus surrounding his execution with a mixture of horror,

been taken or would like to return to after prison.

It has been this lack of concern and initiative in providing positive prisoners' treatment/rehabilitation, human rights and self-help programs consistent with the will of the citizenry that has led to the present problems.

Although we are 'blessed' with such progressive crime-stopping legislations as longer determinate sentencing and the Class V category of crimes, the "lock 'em up forever, out of sight, out of mind" mentality prevails now in so many states. This isn't working either because Correctional officials have admitted that all they do is warehouse prisoners. This is genocide, and particularly so because it is being done in mass.

What is needed is hope, no matter what one's circumstances are in life. Strange, but that is precisely what's being taken away from prisoners. Correctional officials scratch their heads and talk about the problems with prisoners at their institution. We are talking about not only legislators and prison officials with combined salaries worth millions of dollars, but Judges of the criminal courts, the Attorney General, the State's Attorney, the Mayor, the Governor, and

rage, and sympathy. Muslims believe that after a soul dies, it feels two emotions: pity for those left to grieve and carry on the struggle alone, and fear and wonder as it moves into whatever life is to come. Let us do our best to give Gregory confidence that we have his memory and example in our hearts as we carry on the struggle here, and that we wish him the best in his new life...

a host of others.

That is why your support to the program solutions is very important, because if you have asked yourself the question, "What is it that you, as a concerned person, or as a member of a group/organization or committee do to help bring about human rights in prisoners' treatment and self-help in the prisons and put a stop to such cruel acts. Then become a member of the United Prisoners' Action Coalition, otherwise accept the critical fact that you too are taking part in such cruel acts by remaining silent and inactive.

#### We encourage you to:

create committees within your community, group or organization to support and assist us with our objective; or join with other groups, organizations, or committees as either:

- an active member,
- an associate member, or
- a supporter.

For further information please contact:  
Idris Aloama, #125-153  
Maryland House of Correction  
P.O. Box 534  
Jessup, Maryland 20794

"The weakness of the first Tower of Babel was not the intent to reach for heaven,

# Rebuilding the Tower of Babel:

## Revolution in Chiapas

government preparations for war

The indigenous uprising of the Zapatistas (the Zapatista Army of National Liberation / EZLN) in 1994 continues today in the state of Chiapas in Southeast Mexico. Likewise the efforts by the Mexican state to crush the rebellion remain. Mexican troops which have carried out a reign of intimidation, harassment and terror against the rebel communities have recently increased their presence in the area and are training for a "surgical strike" which the government hopes to carry out at the moment that the Zapatistas become politically isolated from the struggling masses of people in Mexico and Zapatista supporters internationally. Perhaps President Zedillo is dreaming of a replay of Peru's success in retaking the Japanese embassy from the Tupac Amaru rebels just a few months ago.

Both the Mexican state and the EZLN entered into negotiations over the rebels broad demands soon after the uprising on New Year's day 1994. Because of the massive outpouring of support for the Zapatistas, the government was denied from the beginning a military solution to the conflict. Likewise the Zapatistas were drawn into negotiations both because a military success was not possible and because their struggle for the transformation of Mexican society could not be achieved simply by the conquest of state power by one regional army. Negotiations provided time in which to sink deeper roots into the struggling communities all across Mexico.

### Drug war / counter-insurgency

Ideological cover for the state escalation of the war in Chiapas has been provided by the War on Drugs. While the U.S. government cannot send massive military aid to commit genocide against an internationally popular rebellion, it can achieve the same thing if the aid is sent in order to combat the drug trade. However the drug trade itself -- the trade routes, the arms and infrastructure, the powerful cartels -- is largely the product of the state counter-insurgencies of the '80s. With Mexico as the new leading importer of cocaine and weed into the U.S. and at least two significant guerrilla armies operating in its territory, new alliances between the U.S. and drug traffickers are bound to arise. The Mexican state itself is totally enmeshed with the rising narco-mafia, as witnessed by the recent assassination scandals within the ruling PRI party resulting from efforts to bust the cartels. The massive influx of cash brought by the shipping of America's cocaine supplies through the Tijuana Cartel (among others) has pumped up the Mexican state in its efforts to build economic ties to the first world, as with the NAFTA treaty. Clearly the greatest threat to the

elites of both the U.S. and Mexico is not drug trade, but popular insurrection. Thus, in the name of fighting drug running, the U.S. will provide this year \$37 million in helicopters and surveillance aircraft most of which will go to the Army which has become the main agent in the 'drug war'. Already aid from previous years to fight the drug war is in action in Chiapas in surveillance over flights of rebel communities. [Thus the state plays both sides of the drug war game to its advantage].

### Social revolution and the solidarity encampment

Between the government troop maneuvers and the terrorism of the drug trade, beneath a threat of death from both the army and the brutal poverty of their daily lives, the people of Chiapas are carrying out social revolution. The people of the rebel communities have armed themselves and organized in defense of their communities. Within the space freed up by the armed struggle they have retaken some of the lands stolen by wealthy cattle ranchers, who are also the local political enforcers of the PRI regime. The communities have instituted a directly democratic self-determination where decisions are made by all the members of the communities rather than being decided by representatives and in the case where someone is made a representative they are immediately recallable if they violate the will of those they represent. At the same time that the oppressed indigenous communities have collectively seized their lives from the oppressor state and all the capitalist/imperialist interests it serves, the women of the communities have taken up of their own a struggle in the communities against men's domination of women. The rebel women's daily struggle against generations of patriarchal domination has been backed up by the Women's Revolutionary Law of the EZLN. The struggle for freedom then has an external and internal dynamic where the women who carry arms against imperial rule at the same time have to deal with the oppression of their brothers in arms. In the space thrown open by the rebellion women have organized to seize their own freedom. In the same way it is the soul of the Zapatistas' project that people all over Mexico will take the opportunity of this break in social control to take back their lives.

The Martyrs of Chicago Anarchist Encampment is a project of anarchists from Mexico, the U.S. and elsewhere to provide direct material aid to this struggle on a daily basis in the rebel communities. The Encampment consists of a school and a women's clinic and center. It isn't a charitable operation or a missionary project. The situation in Chiapas provides the opportunity for a real fissure in the global sys-

### The Problem is Power: Leftists will oppress you too!

Ever wonder if life would be any better under communism? Most likely not for many of us, if the representatives of state communism today are any indication. Here are just a few tidbits about some of the leftist groups (read 'aspiring statist groups') that have been in the news lately.

**PERU** - Nothing will take away the heroism of the young militants of the MRTA who occupied the Japanese embassy in Lima for six months until they were slaughtered by the Peruvian state. But there are plenty of questions we have always had about the politics of the MRTA. One of the more troubling is the allegation by the Lima Homosexual Movement (MHOL) and others that the MRTA has an official policy of assassinating gay men. Of course, the truth about this issue is plenty murky, but whatever the case is, the leadership of the MRTA has never denied any of the numerous massacres of gay men it has been accused of. We quote from *Democracy*, where we got this information: "Killing or otherwise oppressing people because of whom they choose to fuck is reactionary, and is politically and morally unacceptable." Nuff motherfucker said. (Note: the week we sent this off to press, the MRTA had just issued a statement in which they denied having a position as an organization on homophobia, and acknowledged that 'diverse cultural groups' had a moral right to fight for equal rights and autonomy. We hope this represents a new sensitivity on the part of the left towards the struggles of gays and lesbians...)

**CONGO-KINSHASA** - The recent revolution in what used to be called Zaire seemed like one of the fastest guerrilla wars ever: within seven months the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo and Zaire, led by Laurent Kabila, fought the government's army and Croatian mercenaries all the way back across the country and marched on the capital. In reality, the group has been organizing for 30+ years; in 1964, Che Guevara secretly went to the Congo to fight with the revolutionaries and apparently wasn't too impressed with Kabila. A recently translated portion of his Congo diaries has this to say: "I have never seen a man so unfit to lead a revolution... He prefers to spend all his time in Paris or Dar-es-Salaam, in the saloons and whore-houses, enjoying luxury and issuing political proclamations, to struggling on the front line with his troops..."

**NORTHERN IRELAND** - During the Irish Republican Army's ceasefire of last year, the organization apparently decided to keep its weapons in shape by starting a campaign of shooting, beating, and kneecapping ecstasy dealers. A string of murders of Ex dealers in the six counties (British-occupied Northern Ireland) was claimed by a group called Direct Action Against Drugs, believed to be a front for the IRA/Sinn Fein. The Workers Solidarity Movement, an anarchist group based in Belfast, raised the question of why the IRA has never done a thing to fight the heroin epidemic—a much more dangerous drug than E. Maybe its that ecstasy is a drug associated with a youth scene which is growing, tearing down old barriers, and changing the culture in a way the IRA doesn't want to learn to adapt to? Its easier for wanna-be nationalist politicians to have the people be junkies, dependant and unthinking, than to have them be part of a scene that's openly questioning all aspects of capitalist mores and morals—and worse, be completely out of control of the older generation's past and prejudices (um, excuse me, "revolutionary morality").

tem of exploitation and domination. The encampment hooks up resources and labor to this struggle and gives rebels from other parts of the world experience in a revolutionary situation. Nonetheless, for the revolution of Chiapas to be sustained in Chiapas it must arise in the rest of the world. The Zapatistas understand this, as they have said, "the banner we are raising is too large for us alone."

### The encounter in Spain'

Acknowledging the dire need for world revolution, the Zapatistas have moved to develop a new kind of relationship with their supporters internationally. The analysis of Neo-liberalism as the dominant capitalist strategy now in effect has provided the basis for conceiving a new international alliance

of resistance (check the article "neo-liberalism in eastern europe" in this section for a description of neo-liberalism). The violence of neo-liberal restructuring is the common experience of more and more people around the world across all borders. And it is the scattered resistances to the multiple expressions of this singular capitalist program that will provide the basis for a coordinated assault on the system.

The Zapatistas have begun to hold international gatherings to advance this discussion, the last one in Chiapas this past summer. From July 26 to August 3, there will be a gathering in 'Spain' to continue this process of building international solidarity and resistance. We will have a report on the fruits of this discussion in our next issue.

but the lack of an effective translation team." — Subcomandante Marcos, EZLN

# International News of Resistance

Eight years ago now, the stone idols of Lenin and Stalin have crumbled into rubble in town plazas all over Eastern Europe. The past decade has been spent building up the "free market" and dismantling the welfare state that at least gave everyone food, medical care and an "education". This is neo-liberalism: the elimination of social supports to the working class, the breaking of all deals between workers and bosses, and the re-organization of ALL ASPECTS of life around capitalist competition. It's happening everywhere. The dismantling of fake communism in Eastern Europe is the same thing as the dismantling of the welfare state in the U.S. Both changes are part of the creation of a cheap global labor market.

Eastern Europe now exists as a low-wage labor pool open to international capitalist plunder, where once it was monopolized by "communist" bloc capitalists. Or that is the plan in every country that they can secure from insurrection. With the defeat of the "communists", western capital can now drive down wages everywhere else.

Since the lands of eastern europe have been 'liberated' they now must be re-secured by Western Capital. So far this has been a difficult project as is amply illustrated by civil war in Yugoslavia and mass armed insurrection in Albania.

Yet, less spectacular examples are just as significant. Not long ago it was reported on tv news that an American entrepreneur operating in Russia had been gunned-down on the street by a business partner with whom conflicts had arisen. The Mafia or wild-west style of Russian business practice reveals how far the situation is from a rationalized and orderly system required for major investment and thorough integration into the world capitalist system. It is in the light of a Western capitalist lockdown of eastern europe that we should also understand Poland & the Czech Republic's admittance to NATO. This is significant as a redefinition of "European" borders. With the wealthiest countries moving towards a unified European state, the excluded "European" countries will be redefined — as what, is yet to be seen.

A recent report printed in the Detroit anarchist journal, *Fifth Estate*, de-

scribes Russia as having slipped into a period of stagnation despite the erosion of centralized state power. Cities are ruled most often by the former party elite who have come into possession of the old state-run industries. The collapse of the welfare programs of the former USSR have meant the predominance of the 'black market' in the day to day survival of Russian workers. A good bit of the economy comes from the import and trade of Western goods, some of it contraband. This has given rise to a certain class of Nouveau Riche that is also something of a Mafia, at least in the sense that you know to not get in their way. Also in many cases workers are 'paid in kind' — that is, a portion of what they produce, which they must then sell on the streets to get cash.

The brunt of these transformations is borne by the women, at the same time that the women are the base for the whole country's survival. In the same issue of *Fifth Estate* another report describes the situation of women who are a majority of the industrial laborers but are paid 70% of what men make. But more important are the small gardens in each household that are cultivated by the women and which make the difference between survival and starvation. All this, while at the same time they keep the house together and raise kids for their husband (and the capitalists). Though women's work feeds, shelters, and enriches the country, women are dominated socially, economically, and politically. But this is changing as women begin to define their autonomy.

Comrades in Hungary report the age of retirement was recently raised several years to 62, which also happens to be just 4 years short of the average life span there. "Rationalization" of education and health care has cut thousands of workers. And for the first time in a half century, education and health care are not free and guaranteed but the privileges of the wealthy. It all sounds strangely familiar to transformations occurring in our own neighborhoods. And so in the emerging struggles to re-take our own lives we got to understand that ultimately our struggle is strategically linked to the struggle of the working class in eastern europe, and all over the world.

## Raids Against 'Interim' Autonomist Line In Berlin

On June 12, 1997, more than 500 police in Berlin carried out a series of raids aimed at criminalizing the weekly autonomist publication *Interim*. State agents searched several houses in the Berlin districts of Friedrichshain, Neukölln, and Kreuzberg. Several individuals were charged with various felonies including "rewarding or supporting illegal actions".

A successful criminalization of the *Interim* would be much more of a blow to the German radical-left than the re-

cent state campaign against the underground publication *Radikal*, because whereas *Radikal* has only been sporadically published over the past few years, *Interim* has appeared "every week" since the late 1980s. Published as a forum for discussion for Berlin's radical/autonomist scene, the magazine has relevance all across Germany, as it provides an anonymous forum for communiques from militant action groups, mobilizations for demonstrations, and debates on politics and strategy.

## Fire and Flames for Every State: Raids and Trials Against the Italian Anarchist Movement

On June 1, 1995, four anarchists in Trient—Christos Stratigopoulos, Antonio Budini, Carlos Tesserri, and Jean Weir—were sentenced to 5 years (Carlos) or 3 years and 4 months (the others) in prison for a bank robbery. But it seems that this verdict was not enough for the State. So two more bank robbery charges were filed against the four. On November 16, 1995, there were police raids all across Italy (including on the islands of Sardinia and Sicily) and the homes of 60 anarchists were searched.

Despite not finding anything, charges were filed, including "forming a subversive organization", "armed organization", "possession of weapons and explosives", and so on. Even one "accomplice to murder" charge was filed! On January 16, 1996, state witness Mojdeh Namsetchi, Carlos' ex-girlfriend, stated that she had taken part in the two bank robberies along with the other four anarchists. Despite contradictions in her testimony, the judge on January 31, 1996 sentenced Carlos to 7 1/2 years in prison and the other three to 6 1/2 years. On September 16/17, 1996 there was another massive wave of repression: 60 house raids, 70 investigations, 20 warrants issued, including 9 more charges filed against the already imprisoned anarchists: Jean Weir, Antonio Budini, Carlos Tesserri, and Christos Stratigopoulos, Marco Camenisch, and others. Among those arrested in the raids were Alfredo Bonanno (Jean's husband), Giuseppina Ricobuoni (Antonio's partner), Stefano Moreale, Tiziano Andreozzi, Salvatore Gugliara, and Antonio Gizzo. These comrades are presently being held in isolation in Rebibbia prison. The remaining wanted comrades were able to elude the police during the raids. The State's imaginary conspiracy - kidnaping, bombings against police cars and army barracks, bombings of the supermarket chain Standa, car bombings, and to top it all off, several counts of attempted murder

— is based on statements from Namsetchi. State's witness Namsetchi was "sick" and couldn't attend the first hearing on November 7, and she was several hours late for the trial on December 13, 1996. When she finally was brought into the court, all supporters of the defendants were removed from the courtroom to "protect" the witness. After giving lots of contradictory testimony [she had said 6 people drove in a small van from the train station to the bank, now she said 5 people walked — many miles! — to the bank, and fled from the bank in a car], she finally broke down at the end in tears. The cop who "convinced" Namsetchi to rat on her friends was also supposed to testify, but

he did not appear. After a 2-3 hour pause the court reconvened at 11:00 pm and the guilty verdict against the anarchists was given, despite the obviously contradictory testimony from the state's witness. Because the deed was a repeat offense, the court "only" sentenced them to 2 years in prison (unlike the 6 years in the first trial). Supporters jeered the court after the verdict was read, and the cops then forced people out.

We reprint here a public statement written by Jean Weir, one of the comrades currently in prison, in which she describes the trial last year:

Fire And Flames For Every State!  
Everywhere. We will be everywhere.

Four anarchists - Antonio, Christos, Carlos, Jean - are arrested following a robbery. The state has decided that the robbery is to be multiplied by three. Two unresolved cases supply the material necessary. A little girl who does not even remember the instructions the judges gave her, invents having participated in 2 robberies herself. She remembers nothing, but already she involves another three anarchists. Judges Vigna and Marini would like to use the same girl to transform anarchist publications and initiatives, as well as the thousands of attacks which anonymous hands have realized wherever the structures of domination and poison exist, into an armed gang with verities and organization charts: The state sees its own reflection in the mirror. The farce has already led to the sentencing of comrades on first degree. On November 7th in Trento, the appeal is due to take place. The macabre dance repeats itself. In the face of this spectacle of power and death, the only living elements are our comrades and the solidarity that links them. The courts could not contain this solidarity. It went beyond them, towards freedom, revolt, joy. Now our comrades will be put on show again like animals in cages, sacrificial figures on a stage that turns them into passive spectators, consumers of another infamous buffonery. The script would have us turn up there again. Judges, the game is clear: Everyone into the court, everyone putting on a mask. The defection is simple: it is called life. You want defense, you will get attack. You want water, you will get fire. We will be the ones to play. Everywhere.

J. Weir - Autumn 1996

To support the comrades' struggles in Italy you can write to Comitato di Difesa Anarchici, c/o El Paso Occupato, via Passo Buole 47, 10127 Torino, Italy and also on the Internet at <http://www.ecn.org/zero/canenero.htm>.

"In giving dynamite to the downtrodden millions of the globe science has done its best work." — 'Alarm', Feb 1885

# "ONLY WE CAN MAKE OURSELVES FREE AND OH SO HIGH!"

## a book review

Baumann, Michael. *How it all Began; The Personal Account of a West German Urban Guerrilla*. Vancouver, Pulp Press. 1981 (2nd edition). 131 pp. \$6.00

"The city has always bothered me because I grew up in the country — those heaps of factories give me a pain in the ass. So you sit there in the bus, and you hear the same conversations, see the same drawn faces, one drunk always more fucked up than the next. Or you hear about the same shitty TV movie which you unfortunately saw the night before, and then on the bus the next day you get it all over again, horrifying, a thousand interpretations of that shit. Unrested, hungry you have no money for cigarettes, everybody else is smoking, so you're already pissed off. You get to work, you can't see any sense in it. It just breeds contempt in you. You want to tear it down."

### *How it All Began*

*How It All Began* tells the story of Bommi Baumann, a working class german kid who took up arms against a life sentence of boredom and oppression. Bommi tells how he got into rock and roll, he grew his hair, he hung out at the freak bars sprouting up around West Berlin. A sense of disgust, both for the possibilities that life was presenting and for the abuse he received for looking like a hippy freak, gave him a basis for identifying with the Black blues singers he had started to dig. Not only that, but it was a working class thing too, with rock n' roll, cause it was working people who could naturally get with the type of things rock n' roll was all about; in particular he mentions fucking. For real, I guess you could say it was all "sex, drugs and rock n' roll" in the beginning.

Much like in the US, the last half of the sixties in West Germany brought with it major demonstrations against the Vietnam war, a socialist student movement, and a counterculture "freak scene". What some parts of the freak scene offered that the other scenes didn't was the possibility to change your self, your life as you lived it now. Kommune 1 (K1) was probably the vanguard of this development at the time; and Bommi got with them in 1967. To the political ideas that students talked about it gave a concrete possibility: a collective life that attempted to break with all bourgeois crap. K1 was a political collective as well. They took part in the anti-war movement. Mostly they used pranks and ridicule to attack the authorities. Their actions were always at the same time play aimed to expose the system. One kommunard during his trial shit in front of the judge and wiped his ass with the legal papers. They also had the first "be-ins". All of this was important because it gave people who couldn't relate to the stu-

dents' abstract, intellectual trip a way to resist. But a number of things pushed K1 past its limits. At a certain point just about everyone had some time to do for insulting cops, contempt of court, destruction of property or whatever. They were not ready to be illegal. Then a cop shot Benno Ohnesberg, a student demonstrating against the Shah of Iran; and within a year an attempt was made on the life of Rudi Dutschke, a much loved radical student leader. That was 1967-'68 and knowing that the state was aiming for you made everything change. Following the assassination attempt thousands rioted all across Germany.

"So we went to the Technical University and then of course to Springer's [a right wing newspaper publisher that always provoked shit against the radicals] on Koch St. On the way over we smashed all the windows in the America House. On the way over to Koch St. my whole life ran through my mind. All the beatings I'd had, all the things that happen to you that you feel are unjust. Indignation at the attempt on Rudi was so great in Germany that something happened in every city that same night. The air was so full of sympathy that the bulls [police] didn't dare interfere... We got the molotovs... and threw them at the Springer trucks. That was really good."

That so many had fought in the streets against the state terror gave Bommi and other comrades a deeper awareness of possibilities of taking whole scenes into revolutionary struggle. Bommi and other "flipped out workers" moved in many circles between workers' taverns, the freak quarter, the political scene, building up a culture of resistance. By '68 plenty of dope was coming into cities like West Berlin and the freaks became enthusiasts, Bommi among them. That was how the Central Committee of the Roaming Hash Rebels began. The "Central Committee" part was a bust on android leftists. But the whole idea was to create revolutionary movement among dopers based on their own situation.

"It was in taverns like the Zodiak, the Inexplicable Shelter for Travellers, where it began, where we were able to bring it all to a militant level. When the bulls came

to raise hell, we gathered everyone outside and tore up the pavement. So you pick up the rocks — somewhere there is a car listening to the police radio — so we'd go for the radio cars and keep them off our necks. Hardly anyone was ever arrested, and they stopped seizing our shit — of course that was the basis of your existence at that time; if you had to keep throwing it away at every corner, you'd go crazy."

"So we began making an analysis and laying out problems and heightening contradictions, where they were concrete for people day by day in confrontation with the police"

They also hooked up lawyers and doctors for people, tried to keep the mafia out of the dope market, and put a lot of work into helping people get off heroin. As they put it: "the passionate fixer can exchange the needle for the gun". They took part in the anti-war demonstrations, forming militant blocs of several hundred. The destruction of cop cars was even a hobby for a time: calling in false alarms, ambushing the cops when they showed up, and then rocking and rolling the cars and burning 'em. When you got this going on around you it starts you thinking. A lot of people began taking actions further and little amateur bombs started going off. There was one for Nixon's visit, another for a department store. These bombs often didn't even go off and never hurt anyone, in the beginning. And within the Hash Rebels scene the ethic was always to take actions that anybody could do, so that the struggle could be taken up as broadly as possible; to encourage people to "destroy that which destroys you".

Violent resistance deepened in this way. People learned how to deploy their own violence against that of the state. At the same time the experiments in living that had begun in places like K1 continued. Bommi had left there and a little later moved in at the Wieland Commune. All 15 or more people in the house sleeping in one room, several kids living there also. They ran a printing press out of the house, running off copies of Bakunin's collected works. They also ripped off stores for money. Attempts to break social control on a everyday level were being made all around. People could experience the possibilities of a new life in the way they related to each other, the way they survived, the way they resisted the authority that had always crushed them.

However somewhere along the line a boundary was crossed that changed the movement's whole relationship to violence. Mainly as an act of solidarity

with Third World liberation struggles, bombings against the state apparatus were escalated. This was the point where the more spectacular, "heavy" guerrilla groups started to make their appearance felt. The new style hit the scene in November 1969 in what can only be seen as a hopelessly clueless action—a firebombing of several Jewish synagogues on the anniversary of Kristallnacht, to show solidarity with the Palestinian struggle. Their desire was to bring the guerrilla struggles of Palestine, Uruguay, Guinea Bissau inside the imperialist castle of Europe. However, instead of being another mass-supported guerrilla organization with strong roots in the feelings of alienation and oppression that gave birth to it, the German guerrilla movement became, in the words of one contemporary critique, "like technicians, like soldiers, like shock troops in enemy territory cut off from practical reality, from the personal and political experiences of the people among whom they live." All along, the struggle had been anti-imperialist. People had all along felt a real sympathy for the Viet Cong. But now this had to be everything. The Hash Rebellion had been a germination of social revolution in the cities of Germany. The new course gave all this up, and in place of creating a new life with the people around you, the choice was made to "support" people trying to do the same thing somewhere else. At one time they had operated on the principle that "one doesn't fight because there is fighting in Vietnam — you can't expect that from anyone, its pure nonsense". Somehow they lost this understanding.

The logic of illegality soon forced the ol' freaks to cut their hair and take on a straight appearance; it also forced them to break almost all contact with the communities from which their sense and purpose of struggle had emerged. All the experiments that had been made in new ways of relating to each other that had been gone through in K1, Wieland and other communes now had to be cast off. First priority was making the bombs blow up on time; everything else had to be cut. Thus many of the old bourgeois, patriarchal ways reestablished themselves among the guerrillas, something that the women inevitably bore the brunt of. Where once violence had come from the people, now it came from small groups who had become isolated from the people and their struggles. This could only mean the dismemberment of the movement and the eventual capture or death of every one of the guerrillas.

This change in focus was also a class question, as Bommi makes clear. He points out that while the most militant section of the counterculture, and later the June 2nd movement, were based in a working-class perspective, the RAF "was purely a student group at the core,

"Summer's here and the time is right for rising in the streets." — Rolling Stones

all intellectuals". Whereas the early experiments in illegality came out of the natural development of working-class rebels searching for space in which to build a real life, the escalation to "terrorism" was an abstraction, a decision made by intellectuals who didn't have the healthy, spontaneous relationship to violence that Bommi and his group did. And once one group crossed the line that separated the "fun-guerilla" from the "terrorist", everyone else had to follow suit or risk being out of touch with the times.

From such a position, violence lost the passion and humor that it maintained during the days of the Hash Rebellion. The relationship to it was more abstract. The violence of those who had set out to birth a new and liberated life, had come to look very much like the impersonal, mechanized violence of the state. It became harder to justify. The struggle became solely a matter between the revolutionaries and the state. Such a situation plays perfectly into the hands of the state. And in fact from the beginning the state had several agent provocateurs operating within the movement who, among other things, supplied the movement with bombs. The movement ended up fighting on terrain that the state controlled. This was ruinous: it not only was a tactical error but it undercut the whole life that the struggle must make possible.

These were the conclusions Bommi came to, living underground, the police hunting him, seeing friends tortured, shot down in the streets, the splintering of the movement. His group split in half, one part kept up the bank robberies, the bombings, while he and a few others tried to go back to the people. For them it had become a trap in which continuing would bring only ruin and self-betrayal. Bommi doesn't make a program for revolution. But he says that struggle has to learn love, that people have acted out of rigidity and fear, nothing that can make a new life. There is need to find ways that can lead to freedom, to possibilities for real life. Out of the mix of disgust and desire that this life keeps filling us with, Bommi and his comrades made a move for the exit of this shitty society. The roads they traveled are our history, the history of all people who feel the same things in their heart and want only to be free. We try to learn from our history, cause in the end we got to succeed.

After leaving the June 2nd Movement and "putting away the gun", Bommi stayed underground, an illegal for almost ten years, where he wrote this book. He was finally arrested in 1981 in London.

### Where it all fit in

When this book was first published in the fall of 1975, a number of people from all sections of the movement were beginning to question the entire existence of the urban guerrilla struggle. All three

high-profile guerrilla organizations—the RAF, the June 2nd Movement (which Bommi had been involved with), and the Revolutionary Cells—had been extremely active in 1975. Plenty of spectacular successes seemed to be taking place—that spring, the June 2nd movement had successfully kidnapped a local politician and traded him for five of their imprisoned comrades—but at the same time many people were starting to see the situation as a huge cycle of violence that could only spiral out of control until all of the gains of the movement were lost. Attitudes were crystallizing into two main definable types: on one hand, the guerrillas welcoming the state repression as a matter of course, seeing their bombs and armed actions as part of the process of destabilizing society by any means available, hoping that fear would force the capitalist state to show its true fascist face; and on the other the growing "spontaneist" movement and others who saw the armed struggle leading nowhere but to a "politics of the worst" and further alienation and depersonalization of the struggle and instead tried to organize within the law to avoid repression and to try and build a radical mass consensus. What interests us about Bommi's book is that he sees the inherent failure in each of these positions—the "return to a kind of bourgeois morality"—and tries to expand the terms of the debate beyond this apparent dead-end.

Another important piece of the background behind this story was the reaction of the German state. On Nov. 14, 1975, thirty policemen with submachine guns broke into the publishers' office, searched and ransacked the place, and confiscated all the copies of the book they could find. It's interesting that a book which is essentially "a call to put away the gun" would elicit such a response from the state (although, of course, it wasn't too far out of context at the time). All along, the state's reaction to the armed struggle was somewhat confusing—to the point where a number of people began to feel that the state must actually prefer to have an authoritarian vanguardist armed-struggle opposition to the alternatives. In 1980, Hans-Joachim Klein, an anti-authoritarian former member of the Revolutionary Cells explained the situation like this: "It's the insane reactions of the State that have made a Hydra out of the armed struggle.

For me, the whole time it was a question of creating human values which did not exist in capitalism, in all of Europe, in all of Western culture—they'd been cleared away by the machine. That's what it's about: to discover them anew, to unfold them anew, and to create them anew.

Like a cornered monster, the armed struggle continued for a number of

years, passionately and violently ignoring this and any other criticisms from comrades in the movement. The June 2nd Movement was the first organization to give up; its actual practice had long since overshadowed its stated anarchist ideology, and in the 80's the group dissolved, with the political prisoners reorganizing themselves into the RAF. The RAF continued intermittently into the 90's, while undergoing a self-criticism process trying to change its direction and "get back to the people". Of all the urban guerrilla groups from this period, the ones which were able to see themselves as part as the social movements of the younger generations—particularly the Revolutionary Cells and Rote Zora—survived the changing times better than any of the others. The Revolutionary Cells tried to use their armed activities to back up struggles which had been initiated from below, within the autonomen movement, rather than pretending to be a Marxist-Leninist "vanguard" leading an abstract struggle against imperialism, capitalism, God, the world, whatever. In the same way, the "wimmin's gang" Rote Zora acted as a force within the radical feminist movement, taking up many of the critiques which radical feminists were making of the movement and acting in support of a number of radical feminist struggles. These developments were probably the only hope for armed groups to have any relevance whatsoever in the new social climate.

The 'spontaneist' movement was a product of the initial backlash against the urban guerrilla movement. Emotionally its roots were similar to those described in Bommi's book: the revulsion at a "people's violence" that had completely lost the consciousness of love that it used to justify itself, the realization that isolated groups operating underground could never organize a mass movement or hold themselves accountable to criticism from a mass movement. What they stood for was less clear, and many of the ideas which were expressed fell back into the old trap of 'working within the system'. A simplistic belief in 'spontaneity' meant that there was no reason to organize anything.

In a lot of ways, the history of the last generation has been a history of attempts to resolve this contradiction between on the one hand, the arrogance and death trips of the bombers and bank robbers shut off from the world in their safehouses and cellars, and on the other hand, the powerlessness of the students and alternative scenes who, in response, rejected all forms of actions outside the legal limits of the system. Most of the recent developments in the German leftist scene, from the squatter's movement to the 'autonomen' to the anti-fascist movement, saw themselves as trying to



break out of this dead-end.

### What it Means Today

In their foreword to the book, translators Helene Ellenbogen and Wayne Parker describe the book as "a link between our history and our future". Even though twenty-five years have passed since the events described in the book occurred, that link is still a crucial one to emphasize. The politics of the armed-struggle that Bommi was criticizing are nearly completely played out by now. As the squatter's movement, and later the autonomen movement, became the most vital force in radical politics in Germany, the old organizations—the RAF and the like—proved to be incapable of setting an agenda or giving any helpful direction to a new generation of revolutionaries. In the same way, organizations with similar politics in the U.S.—which for the most part have been reduced to solely political prisoner support work—have in large part been unable to speak in a coherent way to new social forces developing and provide any kind of direction for radical movements trying to develop politics and practice relevant to our times.

*How it All Began* is a useful book to read on several different levels. At a time when 'political violence' is concentrated in the hands of the state, confused right-wing militias, and fascist Klan-type groups, those of us who feel a need to counter that can start feeling frustrated and helpless real easily. Looking back at 'how it began' for us, the emotional considerations that led whole communities, whole scenes, to the point we're at today, can be a helpful reflection as we try to move ahead into the future. This book, with its basic and insistent demand to move beyond dogmatic isolation, can help focus our energy for the necessary road ahead.

This book is available from us for \$5 ppd. See ad page 15 for more information.

"Revolution is about finding a way... or making one." — Flint Gregory Hunt

## NEO-NAZIS THREATEN PENNSYLVANIA ANTI-RACISTS Death threats against activists escalate

The following is a message from Floyd Cochran of the Education and Vigilance Network based in Potter County, Pennsylvania. The E&V Network is a group which monitors the activities of the extreme right in Pennsylvania and tries to organize an anti-racist presence on the very terrain that the white supremacists are trying to claim for themselves. E&V was involved in starting the Potter County Unity Coalition, an interfaith religious coalition speaking out against hatred, and has worked closely with the Anti-Racist Action network, giving workshops on confronting organized racism. The nazis, quite obviously, don't like this. We print this both to inform people about the situation and in hopes that local readers of our paper will be able to mobilize in support of Floyd and the E&V network in the event they are more seriously attacked. We need to keep in mind our comrades who are out on the front lines and be ready to support them.



May 4, 1997

To Anti-Racist Action and Friends - This morning the Education & Vigilance Network and the Potter County Unity Coalition received [a threatening e-mail message] from August Kreis. Kreis is a Christian Identity white supremacist and neo-nazi gang leader in Potter County, Pennsylvania. Last week Kreis was found not guilty of terrorizing his neighbors, this week he is sending out veiled threats to local anti-racist activists. As was clear in the letter, Kreis and his gang of bigots have us under surveillance. In September 1995 Kreis came to my home and threatened to kill us if we didn't leave Potter County, we are still here in Potter County and we refuse to be intimidated. At the same time we are concerned. Education & Vigilance Network is asking that if anything should happen to us, that we can count

Coudersport, PA, the racist movement is setting up shop and in many rural towns and boroughs they have become entrenched. If we are to counter their message and organizing tactics we must do it here... in Coudersport, Punxtunawney or Bedford, PA.

In Solidarity,  
Floyd Cochran  
Education & Vigilance Network

(Note from *Claustrophobia*: if you have internet access, a good place to get up-to-date news about issues involving anti-racists around the country is the Toronto ARA web page: <http://www.web.apc.org/~ara/> For those without computer access, we can help coordinate a phone tree to respond to situations like the one described in this letter. Contact us by mail or phone to let us know if you're interested.)

religious racialist group called SOCK - the Sons of the Confederate Klan.) The Army of God's stated mission is to "disrupt and ultimately destroy Satan's power to kill our children, God's children". The racist and anti-gay content is pretty apparent — obviously they weren't that concerned about God's children in the bomb craters they left.

WHEELING, WV - A new Christian group called "Defenders of the Family" have apparently taken it on themselves to picket all concerts by men who wear makeup. In early February the group held an "informational picket" outside a Marilyn Manson show, and they announced plans to do the same thing

on your support...

In the last 48 hours I have received numerous e-mails and phone calls that have been extremely threatening not only to me but also to my family and local church ministers. Tonight Ryan Wilson from the nazi Alpha gang sent me a message that "to warn you that we (Alpha) will be holding several events in Potter County this summer. Our web site will be running a report on you, as well as other traitors". Earlier this week we received a message that we were being "watched" and that we would have to pay the "ultimate price" - We live less than 20 miles from August Kreis and his nazi gang, plus his supporters in the militia. We have discussed it here at home and have decided to stay and not move. We have made some inroads here in the county, not everyone is a bigot. We are at the front line here in

## Baltimore's urban restructuring

...continued from page 2

hood any sense of 'empowerment'.

Pigtown is a good example of all this. The city's largest job creator from the empowerment zone program, PTP Enterprises, settled there in 1994 and hired a few hundred local people to work at its electronics packaging factory. Almost immediately, there were conflicts between the workers and the company. When people are trying to maintain a standard of living in a neighborhood that is barely holding itself together, giving them a job where they overwork themselves half to death for pay they can barely survive on is a real insult. A group of employees tried to unionize the shop, and the company responded by firing a number of union supporters and looking elsewhere for employees. Since that point the company has been hiring a number of Vietnamese refugees, who have a much harder time finding any sort of public assistance and have more pressure to tolerate miserable conditions without complaining out loud. Now of course Pigtown has plenty of problems with racism, in the same way any majority white working-class neighborhood in the country does, and the bosses at PTP knew perfectly well that they were in no danger of having all their workers overcome their mistrust of each other and stand up to the owners. In effect, PTP made the tradeoff of giving up some of the tax write-offs they were getting from the empowerment zone program in exchange for a more controllable workforce. In any case, it for damn sure hasn't 'empowered' anyone (except maybe for a few city business owners who now have a new way to milk public dollars while exploiting workers the way they always have).

### Private police and state troopers

Baltimore is one of the country's leading cities when it comes to private security forces. Downtown we have the purple police, the space-age kiosk at Lexington Market, and all the crazy video cameras at intersections all over. Charles Village and Bolton Hill and a few other yuppie garrison districts already have their own private security

teams to clean up their streets. But it doesn't end there. We're entering a serious partnership between the city and state police forces, where state troopers will be working hand-in-hand with local cops in selected 'trouble spots' around the city to lend weapons and tactical experience. Helicopters, cruisers, bike cops, special homicide units, and all that are just becoming everyday sights in a lot of neighborhoods — even more than they have been already.

### The way forward?

These days, Baltimore's problems seem to be no more than intriguing logic puzzles for all the big names in urban planning to play around with. The first major revitalization project was James Rouse's design for Harborplace at the Inner Harbor: a "festival marketplace" which allowed for, respectively, ideological and cosmetic escape from the hopeless inequality and grinding poverty of the inner city, and a new "downtown!" location for the exchange of money between middle-class tourists from the suburbs and corporate chain stores.

Currently the plan being talked about is more along the lines of the proposals put forth by urban control guru David Rusk. In a number of books and articles commissioned by various city governments across the country, he argues for his vision of a city integrated with the surrounding suburbs. He argues that Baltimore, along with dozens of other American cities have passed "the point of no return" — an imaginary creation, although the statistics its based on describe a real situation of human misery. In effect, what he and others like him are saying is that they want to reclaim the benefits of the cities—their cultural, economic, and strategic value—for the mostly white middle class that fled the inner-cities in the wake of the urban rebellions of the 60's and 70's. That means tearing down projects and other dangerous areas, and building up middle-class business control in poor neighborhoods through advisory committees, benefits district associations, empowerment zone 'village centers', etc. The end goal, just like the end goal of everything they do, is control of our lives, of our world. Wait and see...

## News from the Christian Empire (or, more reasons we need a Satanist movement for the coming millennium)

ATLANTA, GA - The so-called "Army of God" is on the move again with a couple of nailbomb attacks on abortion clinics and lesbian nightclubs in Atlanta. (Actually, it's still not clear who actually built and planted those bombs because as usual, bonehead groups all across the country are fighting over who gets to claim responsibility for the attacks. The latest claim is from yet another uptight

when KISS comes to town.

BALTIMORE, MD - Okay, so some Christians are smart enough to see that the world is changing and the old dumb-ass racist approach isn't really going to play anymore. The Christian Coalition organized a conference here in May to bring black and white church leaders together and set an agenda for an interracial conservative-fascist Christian political movement. Obviously this has its good sides — it'll give queers and women a chance to relax and get their shit together by diverting the Christian Coalition's attention for at least a little while away from its usual program of gay-bashing and

polemicalizing about the "satanic evils" of abortion, and it'll put at least some of the Christian Coalition's huge resources to good use rebuilding some of the many black communities which have been attacked by other white Christian fascists recently. Still, you can't trust em. Remember, this is a group whose founder defended apartheid in South Africa, saying "I think 'one man one vote', just unlimited democracy, would not be wise. There needs to be some kind of protection for the minority which white people represent... I know we don't like apartheid, but the Blacks in South Africa don't have it all that bad." Just wait and see what they come up with next...

(murdered by the state of Maryland on 7/2/97, R.I.P.)

# Remembering Judi Bari

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BY BILL WEINBERG

In the early hours of March 2, Judi Bari, a warrior who had come through many battles, died peacefully at her home in Northern California's Mendocino County of breast cancer which had metastasized to her liver. Bari was the most visible leader of Earth First!s struggle to save the ancient redwood forests from the timber industry's chainsaws. She survived a 1990 bombing attack which left her permanently disabled, was framed for attempting to blow herself up, and was suing the FBI at the time of her death.

Born in Baltimore in 1949, Judi was always a fighter. As a student at the University of Maryland, she "majored in anti-Vietnam War rioting," as she put it to her friends. She was a retail clerks Union organizer when she worked at the Baltimore Post Office in the 1970's, and later led a successful wildcat strike at the Washington DC Bulk Mail Center.

Judi moved to Northern California in 1979, working as a carpenter. It was there that she had what she called an "environmental epiphany" on the job. While admiring a piece of siding, she wondered aloud if it came from an old-growth redwood. Her boss blandly replied that the tree it came from was around 1,000 years old. "A light bulb went on. We are cutting down old-growth forests to make yuppie houses," Judi told an interviewer. "I became obsessed with the forests." Judi jumped into the Earth First! movement, teaming up with singing activist Darryl Cherney in 1988. The duo became a musical fixture at redwood rallies, with Darryl strumming guitar and Judi sawing away on her fiddle.

Judi's background as an anti-war protester and union organizer served her well in confronting Earth First!'s own contradictions and limitations. She was the first and foremost Earth First!er to stand up to the movement's media-hound national leadership—a clique around Dave Foreman who controlled the *Earth First! Journal* and were spewing racist pseudo-environmentalist hogwash, scapegoating the Third World and immigrants for the death of the planet. With Bari at the forefront, Northern California's Ecotopia Earth First! challenged Foreman's "eco-redneck" crowd and repudiated their xenophobic crap. Other Earth First! locals followed the Ecotopians' example, a grassroots revolt was on, and Foreman was eventually forced to cede control of the *Journal*. He has since left Earth First!.

Bari recognized that timber industry propaganda was pitting timber workers against environmentalists, the rednecks against the hippies, the



grassroots against the grassroots, while the timber barons laughed all the way to the bank. And she realized that some Earth First! tactics and rhetoric was playing into their hands. She guided Ecotopia Earth First! toward a strategy of non-violent direct action. "Monkeywrenching"—the physical sabotage of bulldozers, or drilling spikes into trees to stop chainsaws—was officially renounced in favor of open, participatory actions like public blockades of logging roads.

Judi's next step was to build bridges between the environmentalists and the timber employees. She started a local of the Industrial Workers of the World—the old IWW, or Wobblies, the radical "One Big Union" which organized militant logging and mining strikes across the West until it was crushed in Attorney General Mitchell Palmer's draconian crackdown in 1920. Bari's Wobbly local at the Fort Bragg Georgia-Pacific mill represented five workers who had been poisoned in a toxic chemical spill. Judi served as a paralegal, writing briefs for the workers' case before the US Labor Department. Many believe this is what made Judi so dangerous that she became a target...

Judi Bari was a tough, wise, and loving warrior who took on all the right enemies and paid for it bigtime. We know that the most fitting tribute to her life is to continue to struggle for the things she fought for. In those immortal words of Joe Hill, the Wobbly leader who was framed for murder and executed in Utah in 1915: "Don't mourn, organize!"

## Raymond La-Science's Trial Statement

...continued from page 8

them, "respect your country, die for your country", but what is the nation for me, its all the earth without borders. "Country" is where I live, whether it is in Germany, Russia, or France, for me "country" or "nation" knows no bounds, it is everywhere that I am contented. I don't distinguish between peoples, I seek only mutual understanding, but around me I see only religious types and Christians or deceitful hypocrites. If the workers would think a bit, they would see and understand that between capitalists there are no bound-

aries, these rapacious wrongdoers organize themselves to oppress others better. It is only now that I am here and it is now that I must live and I shall do just that by any means that science puts at my disposition. I may not live to be terribly old, I will probably be overtaken by the open struggle between me and the society which has better means of winning than I will ever have, but I will defend myself as best I can, to deceitfulness and trickery I will respond in kind, likewise to force, until I am beaten, that is to say, dead...

We hope you enjoyed this issue of *Claustrophobia*. Now that we're on a more regular schedule, we should be able to print more often. Issue #9 will hopefully be out by late summer. Articles, notices, artwork, etc. are welcomed.

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